Guidelines

Guidelines for the Reurbanisation of Metropolitan Toronto

A draft for discussion
December 1991

Prepared by Berridge Lewinberg Greenberg Ltd.
for the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto

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Introduction

Anticipated Growth

Recent projections indicate that the population of the Greater Toronto Area is expected to increase from 4 million to 6 million in the next 20 to 30 years. The Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto has set targets aimed at accommodating a minimum of 300,000 new residents and 400,000 new jobs over this period. As virtually all of Metro's land area is already urbanised, accommodating this growth will involve redevelopment. A framework is needed to guide this process of "reurbanisation".

Basis of the Guidelines

These Guidelines were developed on the basis of a body of research presented in the *Study of the Reurbanisation of Metropolitan Toronto*, the companion report to this document. A comprehensive approach was adopted, aimed at integrating environmental, economic, social and built form issues in the reurbanisation of Metropolitan Toronto.

Reurbanisation provides an opportunity to achieve environmental goals, and to improve the social and physical fabric of the metropolis. For example, reurbanisation can reduce auto dependence in many ways, such as creating the critical densities needed for walking, cycling, and the use of transit. One of the fundamental implications of the Guidelines is that all major new development is served by transit. By definition, reurbanisation involves redeveloping already urbanised areas, which decreases pressure for development of greenfields sites outside Metro. Reurbanisation provides

an opportunity to learn from mistakes of the past, and to create a high-quality, livable urban environment, with building at a human scale. Reurbanisation can ensure a range of places where new kinds of businesses can locate, and promote diversity of housing type and choice. Finally, reurbanisation can support community building and social integration.

Who should use the Guidelines?

The Guidelines are intended to provide guidance to developers, local area and Metro Toronto planners, councillors or other interested persons regarding how the process of reurbanisation is to unfold in Metro over the coming years. They deal with reurbanisation issues at a full range of scales, addressing questions such as:

- *where should reurbanisation occur?*
- *at what densities?*
- *what land uses are appropriate?*
- *how much land should be devoted to streets and parks?*
- *what built forms are appropriate?*

The Guidelines are not intended to address small-scale forms of intensification, such as conversions or infill. Rather, they are addressed to the larger geographical scale of planning, implying an overall urban structure for Metro, and suggest how the reurbanisation of larger areas within the Metro fabric should be reurbanised. In most cases, it is these "reurbanisation areas", described below, which are the subject of the Guidelines, not individual development parcels or sites.

For planners, the Guidelines indicate the elements proposed development should include, and offer a means of evaluating such proposals. For developers, the Guidelines indicate what the Metropolitan Government is looking for in new development schemes. As a framework for guiding urban development in the future based on a comprehensive approach to social, economic, environmental and built environment objectives, the Guidelines may also be of interest to planners and policy makers in other jurisdictions.

Organisation of the Guidelines

The Guidelines are organised on the basis of a "hierarchy of decisions" which will lead the reader through an evaluation process for a reurbanisation area. Each set of Guidelines is preceded by an explanation of their context and rationale. An example showing the application of the Guidelines to an area at Victoria Park and Danforth Avenues is carried through the document. This example is for the purpose of illustration only, showing how the Guidelines might be applied to a particular area. The drawings do not represent a proposed plan for the area.

Throughout the document, there are also several photographs like the one below, denoted by a green border. These are photos of existing building types within Metro, which would fit the scheme for reurbanisation presented in the Guidelines.

Urban Structure and Transit

It is anticipated that as urbanisation continues outside Metro's urban boundaries, there will be a significant influx of commuters to Metro. This will result in a vast increase in the number of cars entering Metro every day. For this reason, and to support general environmental objectives associated with the use of transit (such as reductions in air pollution, noise, and the global warming effect), a fundamental element of the Guidelines is strong support for the use of transit *through reurbanisation at key locations with appropriate densities and land uses*. The Guidelines attempt to integrate land use and transit planning in many ways, including, for example, tying the overall density of an area to the level of transit service available.

At the same time, there is a need to create a context of certainty for development and redevelopment decision-making. One of the main stumbling blocks in current development planning is that levels of future transit service in any given location are not known. Decisions regarding density become based on existing levels of transit service or existing transportation capacity. Planners are reluctant to approve higher densities because existing transportation capacity may not exist, and there is no reliable long term plan for transit improvements in Metro.

In order to introduce an element of certainty into the development planning process, and to provide a firmer basis upon which to make decisions about appropriate densities for development, we have recommended in the companion report that future transit corridors, and the general level of transit service be entrenched in Official Plan policy. In this way, development decisions can be made in the context of greater certainty about the future transportation capacity available to service new development. At the same time this approach would provide a long-term basis for capital funding and construction of capital improvements.

A closer integration of land use planning and transportation planning, and the creation of a more certain transit framework, should serve to smooth the planning process for planners and developers alike. The approach advocated here is designed to work with the marketplace, creating opportunities for growth. In addition, the framework could be implemented so as to create further certainty for development. If the framework is implemented in a proactive way by local governments, with reurbanisation areas predesignated and urban design plans developed, the planning approvals process could be made more efficient. Thus while the Guidelines do guide development in certain ways, for example, directing it to certain locations where transit infrastructure can or will support it, we feel that they also contain the potential for a speedier approvals process which will serve the market as well as the public.

Energy Usage of Urban Transit

Mode	Energy Usage (btu / person)
Intercity rail	442
Light rail	639
City Bus	691
Rapid rail	752
Automobile	4576

Source: Worldwatch (US data)

A - K

The Guidelines

Guidelines for the
Reurbanisation of
Metropolitan Toronto

A

Should the area be reurbanised?

Guidelines for the Reurbanisation of Metropolitan Toronto

Certain types of areas should not be reurbanised because in their present form they play an increasingly important role in the urban fabric and urban environment. Included are natural areas, ravines, parks and open spaces, and the low-rise residential neighbourhoods (though the neighbourhoods will continue to be the locus of small scale forms of residential intensification, such as accessory units and minor infill).

Other types of areas may be reurbanised but will require a special response. In order to ensure a healthy and diverse urban economy and sufficient land for industry in the future, the ad hoc approach that has generally been taken to the redesignation of underutilised industrial areas must be replaced with one which bases such decisions in the context of a Metro-wide assessment of future needs for industrial lands, and the most appropriate locations for redesignations.

We have begun to appreciate the true challenges in the remediation of "brown sites" to make them suitable for reurbanisation. It is essential, therefore, in areas where there is reason to believe that there may be significant problems of soil, air, and water quality, that the process of planning for reurbanisation begin with an environmental audit which would provide an understanding of specific constraints and opportunities. These are often of such a magnitude that they become givens in shaping the approach to development, to urban design, and to the identification of realistic goals for reurbanisation. In fact, the techniques and perspective employed here are very similar in many respects to those which have been developed to deal with environmentally sensitive natural areas. The issue of contaminated sites requires a new approach in which the cost of clean up is not paid for through bonus density, thereby avoiding the resulting possibility of inappropriate built forms.

Low-rise residential neighbourhoods.

GUIDELINES

1. Low rise residential neighbourhoods should not generally be the locus of reurbanisation. Small scale forms of residential intensification such as accessory units and minor infill may continue to occur in these areas, however.

2. Existing natural areas, open spaces and parks should be protected and enhanced.

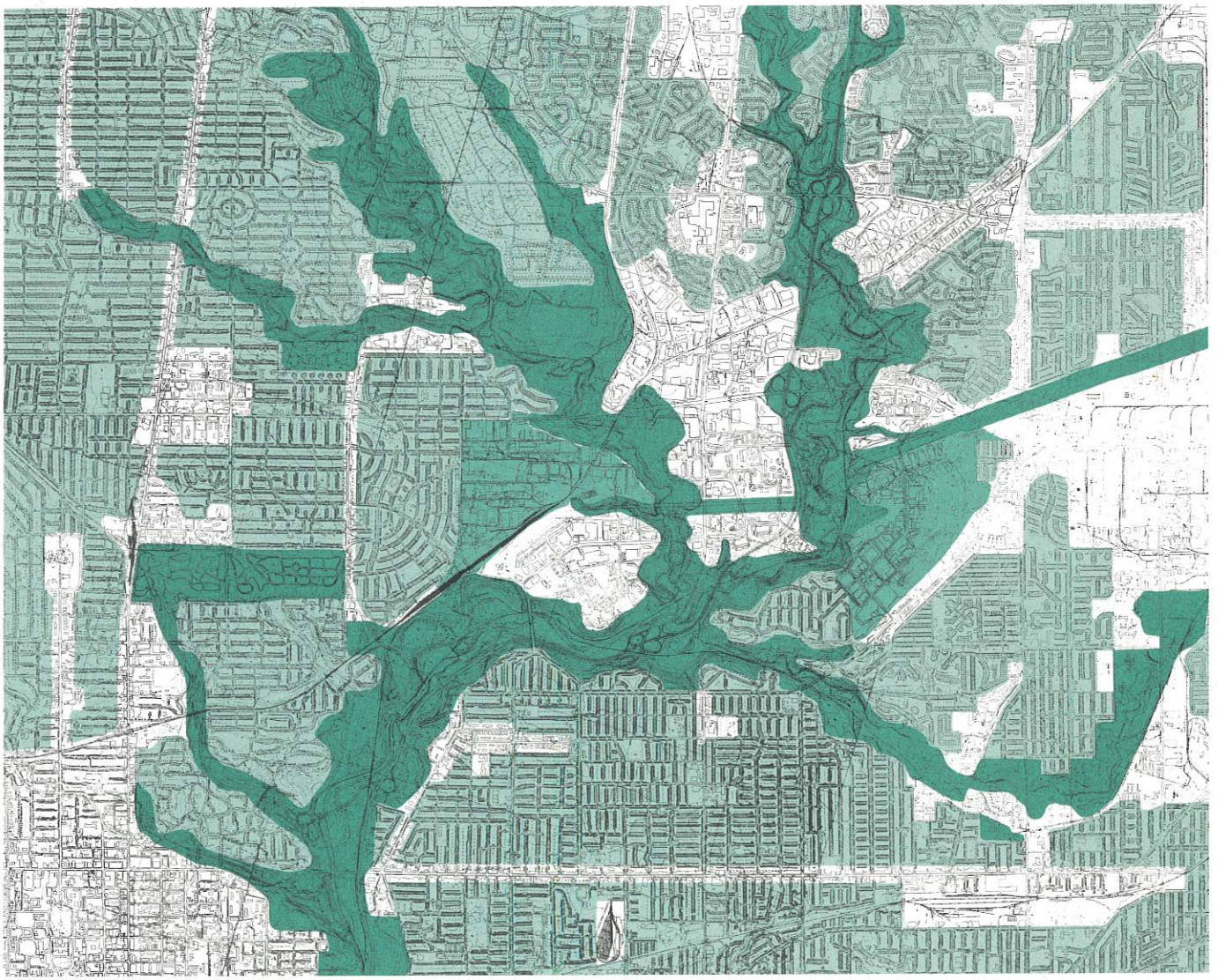
3. When existing developments in natural areas, such as ravines or valleys, become obsolete, these areas should be restored to their natural condition rather than redeveloped.

4. The reurbanisation of under-utilised industrial lands should be decided in the context of a broader understanding of long-term supply and demand for industrial lands, and the implications of decisions to reurbanise such lands on a Metro-wide basis. Redesignation of industrial lands should not be decided solely on a site-by-site or local area basis.

5. The reurbanisation of lands which are potentially environmentally sensitive or contaminated should begin with an environmental audit.

6. Contaminated sites should not receive density bonuses to defray the costs of cleanup. Density and built form decisions should be based on other criteria, as outlined below.

APPLYING THE GUIDELINES



The illustration identifies, in a part of Metro, some of the categories of land outlined in the Guidelines. Within this window of the Metro area there are both open grid, mixed use neighbourhoods, and some of the original sub-urban areas. It shows areas that would not be reur-banised (e.g. natural areas, parks), or areas where special responses may be required (contaminated sites, underutilised industrial areas). It is apparent that only a small portion of the overall urban area will be available for reurbanisation.

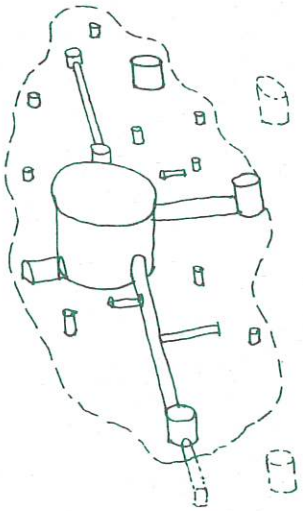
The area around Victoria Park and Danforth contains large amounts of vacant land, and some underutilised industrial space. For the purposes of illustrating the appli-cation of the Guidelines, we will assume that Guidelines 4 and 5 have been met, i.e. that a Metro-wide study has determined that this is an appropriate area for redesigna-tion, and an environmental audit has been completed.

B

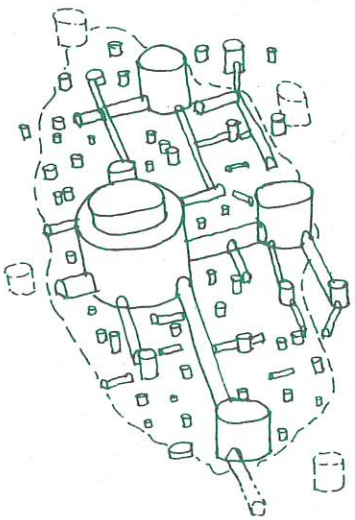
What type of reurbanisation area is it?

Guidelines for the Reurbanisation of Metropolitan Toronto

The particular urban structure (the pattern of distribution of development) of a city or metropolis has many important though often unrecognised implications. It affects the amount of congestion and air pollution, the length of daily commutes for workers of all kinds, the extent to which the transit network is used efficiently, the sense of local community and neighbourhood, access to services and shopping, opportunities for new businesses to locate, and many other aspects of urban life.



Metro's current structure has a dominant core and few centres and corridors.



The evolution of centres and corridors across Metro over time will result in important benefits, such as shorter commutes and stronger neighbourhoods.

Decisions about where reurbanisation should occur, and at what densities, can only be made meaningfully within the framework of a desired urban structure. First, the role of a particular reurbanisation area must be determined within the overall urban structure, and this suggests certain land uses and overall densities.

The appropriate uses, densities and built forms on an individual site or development parcel within a reurbanisation area are then determined within this context, based on other criteria, such as urban design and local factors.

Based on our review of environmental, economic, social and built environment considerations, we have recommended in the companion report a particular urban structure for Metro which we feel best achieves a number of goals. This is essentially a hierarchical, many-centred urban structure, with reurbanisation occurring primarily in many nodes and centres, and along certain streets or "corridors". For reasons that will be outlined below, the number of the largest, most dense employment concentrations, the *"major Metro centres"* would be limited to a very few, while other smaller, less dense nodes or centres would be much more numerous. This multi-centred form is the type of urban structure we are recommending, which provides a context for reurbanisation and the Guidelines.

There is an enormous amount of redevelopment potential in

Metro today. These Guidelines suggest that reurbanisation occur only in selected areas, where the maximum potential exists to achieve public goals such as those mentioned above. The Guidelines direct reurbanisation to *"centres"* or nodal concentrations of development, and *"corridors"*, or linear concentrations of development along major streets and arterials. In addition, there are *"infill areas"*, which do not represent concentrations of development, but places where the existing urban fabric would be extended into a large area which, for various reasons, does not have such a fabric at present (e.g. underutilised industrial areas). All reurbanisation areas are well defined in area and reflect a compact development form that supports walking as a viable means of urban transportation. The classification of types of reurbanisation areas is based on concentrations which exist today in Metro, not on an abstract hierarchy of new types we have invented.

Major Metro Centres

A top planning priority will be to ensure that workers filling the 400,000 new jobs anticipated within Metro, many of whom will live outside Metro, will not rely upon the automobile to travel to work.

NUMBER OF PERSONS ENTERING METRO IN THE MORNING PEAK TIME

		% increase over 1975
1975	113,741	
1981	192,686	69%
1991	294,181	159%
2011*	485,000	326%

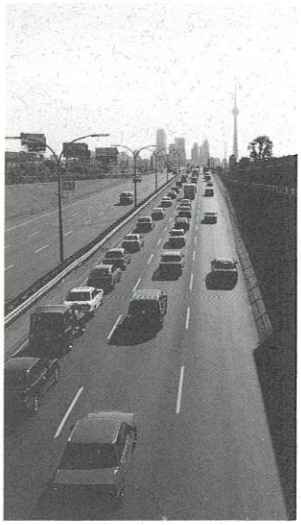
* Prediction based on current development trends.

GUIDELINES

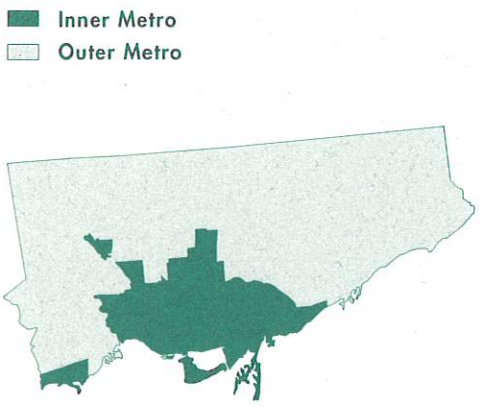
7 **An area of land which is to be reurbanised must be planned in the context of its location and the potential role defined for it in the overall structure of the Metropolitan region.**

8 **Reurbanisation will take place primarily in four types of area:**

- **major Metro centres**
- **centres**
- **corridors**
- **infill areas.**



If current development patterns continue unchanged, more and more people will commute longer distances from outside Metro to jobs in the Central Area.



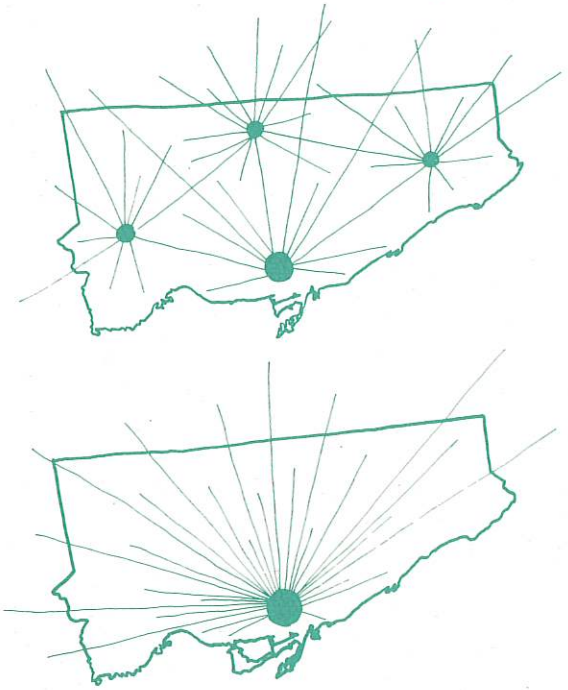
Inner Metro was largely developed before World War II. Outer Metro was built in the post-war, automobile era.

Major Metro centres must therefore be serviced by a high-capacity regional transit network. If GO trains were to fulfil this role, vastly improved frequency of service during peak times and improved service throughout the day would be required.

The size of an employment concentration (i.e. the total amount of commercial floorspace, or the total number of workers) is a critical factor in determining the degree of transit use – the larger the concentration, the higher the share of trips taken by transit. Headquarters of banks or insurance companies, business services such as management consultants, advertising firms or lawyers, are not directly related in function to local or resident population and should be focused primarily in a few major centres. We have set a general target of 15 million sq. ft. of employment-related floorspace, which based on a general relationship between transit and size of employment concentration observed in other North American cities, will lead to at least 30% to 40% of trips being taken by transit. With Metro's developed transit system and tradition of transit use, it is expected that over 40% of trips will be by transit.

This policy of focusing employment in a few centres located in outer Metro will also shorten trip lengths (reducing auto-related pollution and congestion), and provide a critical mass of concentrated economic activities necessary to support economic development in advanced industrial economies. The *major Metro centres* would be limited to the Central Area, North York City Centre, Scarborough City Centre, and one centre in western Metro, near Kipling and Islington Avenues.

An urban structure with a few centres reduces average trip lengths compared to a single-centred city.



Centres

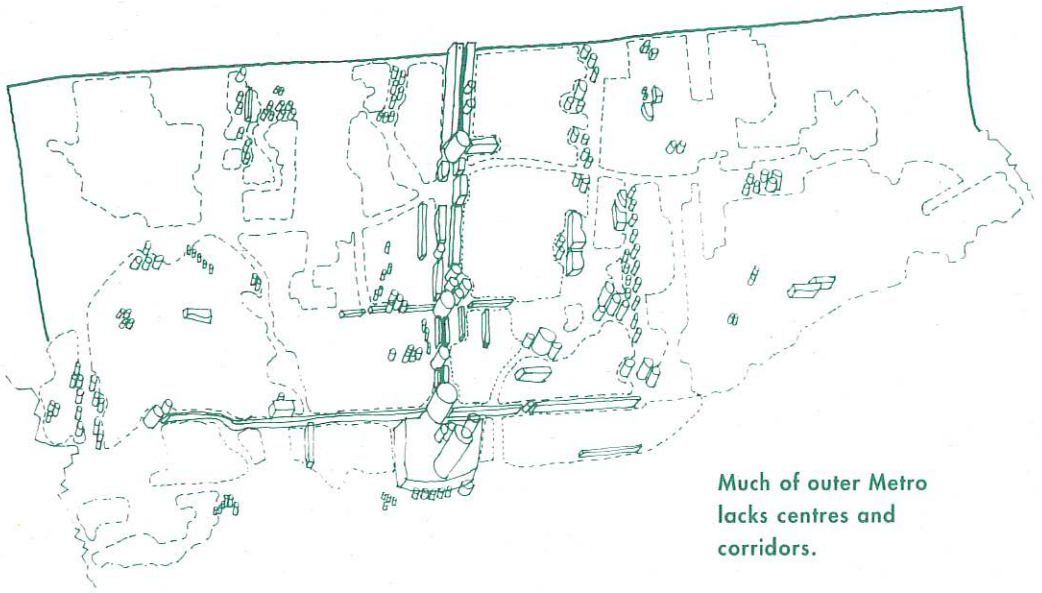
A full range of types of centres is necessary to support diversity of services, economic activities, housing types and building forms. This means centres can and should vary in size, scope, role, and function. *Major Metro centres* are concentrations of employment, services and businesses which fulfill a regional or even national role (e.g. the Financial Core). Other centres are needed to provide secondary locations for "back office" employment or other special but not necessarily head office type uses, and to serve a wider area within Metro. These could be called "secondary centres," and are comparable to what Metro's official plan refers to as "intermediate centres".

One of the major weaknesses of Metro's urban structure has been the lack of con-

GUIDELINES

9 Major Metro Centres:

- are the primary focus for new employment growth;
- are few in number, no more than the existing mature concentrations consisting of the Central Area; and three others;
- aside from the existing Central Area employment concentration, should be located in outer Metro, in locations that represent centres of gravity with respect to present and future housing in and around Metro;
- are located at points of highest capacity transit accessibility; on rapid transit integrated with a high capacity regional transit network, to respond to the high levels of anticipated in-commuting from beyond Metro's borders;
- are well distributed across Metro;
- have compact development, in an area of between 75 and 150 hectares for major Metro centres other than the Central Area;
- have roughly this amount of land available for redevelopment;
- are sufficiently large in floor space or number of jobs, with a minimum target commercial space of about 15 million sq.ft.;
- are nodal in form, rather than linear, in order to support an intensive pattern of walking and a high degree of accessibility.



Much of outer Metro lacks centres and corridors.

centrations of development which serve as local community foci or centres, especially in outer Metro. This role has often been performed by the local or regional shopping centre, which cannot truly serve the multiple functions that a real community centre plays – providing doctor's and other local offices, fruit stands, markets, specialty food stores and restaurants, public services, clinics, recreational centres, and so on. Reurbanisation provides an opportunity to create real community centres in areas that are not well served at present.

Like all reurbanisation areas, secondary and local centres should be walking areas. Local residents should be able to reach them easily and comfortably on foot. They should also be well served by transit.

The density permitted in secondary and local centres depends primarily upon their role and the level of transit service available. Local centres are the smallest, and may fulfill a role as a centre for a very small neighbourhood, consisting only of a few stores, housing and offices or workshops. As such, they would be low or medium density, and do not require a high level of transit service. Secondary centres, on the other hand, may have significant numbers of jobs, and would be high density. They will require a high level transit service. If serviced by GO train, again, a much more frequent level of service would be required.

Corridors

Historically, "main streets" have provided a community focus and identity in towns and cities all over North America. Major streets also act as transit routes, and are therefore excellent locations for transit-oriented reurbanisation.

Metro's major streets and roads are an untapped resource. Reurbanisation along main streets and arterials can create a community focus like the old main streets did, providing a sense of place, local services and amenities that people can walk to from surrounding neighbourhoods. New building along major roads can also better define Metro's urban image, making them more friendly to the pedestrian, while providing residents with excellent access to transit.

A strong relationship exists in Metro between overall gross urban density levels and transit use: the higher the density, the greater the proportion of trips taken by transit. Many

areas of outer Metro have relatively low overall densities and low levels of transit use. In reurbanising these areas, adding population and jobs (or in some cases where household size has decreased, simply restoring population) could result in significant increases in transit use, and support improved transit service. This suggests that it would be particularly beneficial for *corridors*, as well as *centres*, to be formed in outer Metro.

In applying the Guidelines, it is likely that many areas will meet the transit criteria for centres of various kinds. There are many points along the Danforth, for example, where subway stops exist, meeting the criteria for a high density centre. This does not suggest that all of these places are potential high density centres. Not all will have an adequate supply of land available for redevelopment; in many cases they will be surrounded by very viable low density residential uses. Reference should be made to Guidelines 1 to 4. In other cases both land and transit service may be available at places quite close to one another. The location of nearby centres or corridors, existing and future, should also be taken into account, so that a good distribution of centres and corridors of different sizes and types can be achieved. In instances such as these, one area may be designated as a lower-order centre or corridor even though it may meet the criteria of a higher-order reurbanisation area.

Possible Future Corridors

Low Density Corridors:
portions of College, Finch, or Lawrence

Medium Density Corridors:
portions of Spadina, Eglinton, Lawrence

GUIDELINES

10 Centres:

- are many;
- are well served by transit or are designated to be well served by transit according to the transit plan;
- are significantly smaller in size than the *major Metro centres*, fulfilling a secondary or local centre function;
- vary in size, from the very smallest local neighbourhood centre, which may consist only of a few stores, housing and some offices or workshops; to a more substantial secondary centre with a range of services, shopping, recreation, residential and employment uses up to 50 hectares in area;
- have adequate land area available for reurbanisation;
- are developed in a compact manner;
- are distributed throughout Metro;
- are located to respond to need for a community focus.

11 Low Density Centres
Low density centres are serviced at a minimum by frequent, moderate capacity transit vehicles such as buses or streetcars.

12 Medium Density Centres
Medium density centres are serviced at a minimum by frequent, intermediate capacity transit vehicles in their own right-of-way, such as LRTs or buses, or advanced light rail (such as the Scarborough RT), possibly in addition to bus or streetcar service.

13 High Density Centres
High density centres are serviced at a minimum by high capacity rapid transit, such as subway, or two or more frequent intermediate capacity, dedicated right-of-way transit lines, and are integrated with a high capacity regional transit network.

GUIDELINES

14 Corridors:

- **are located along present or future designated transit routes;**
- **should especially but not exclusively be established in low density areas, particularly outer Metro;**
- **where possible, link existing and future *major Metro centres* and *centres*;**
- **are selected, in part, to improve equity across Metro in access to transit service;**
- **are identified, in part, on the ability to realise underutilised development potential;**
- **are identified, in part, on the need for a local community focus;**
- **will generally have a width (including the road right-of-way and flanking properties) of between 100 and 200 metres depending on the location and width of existing street.**

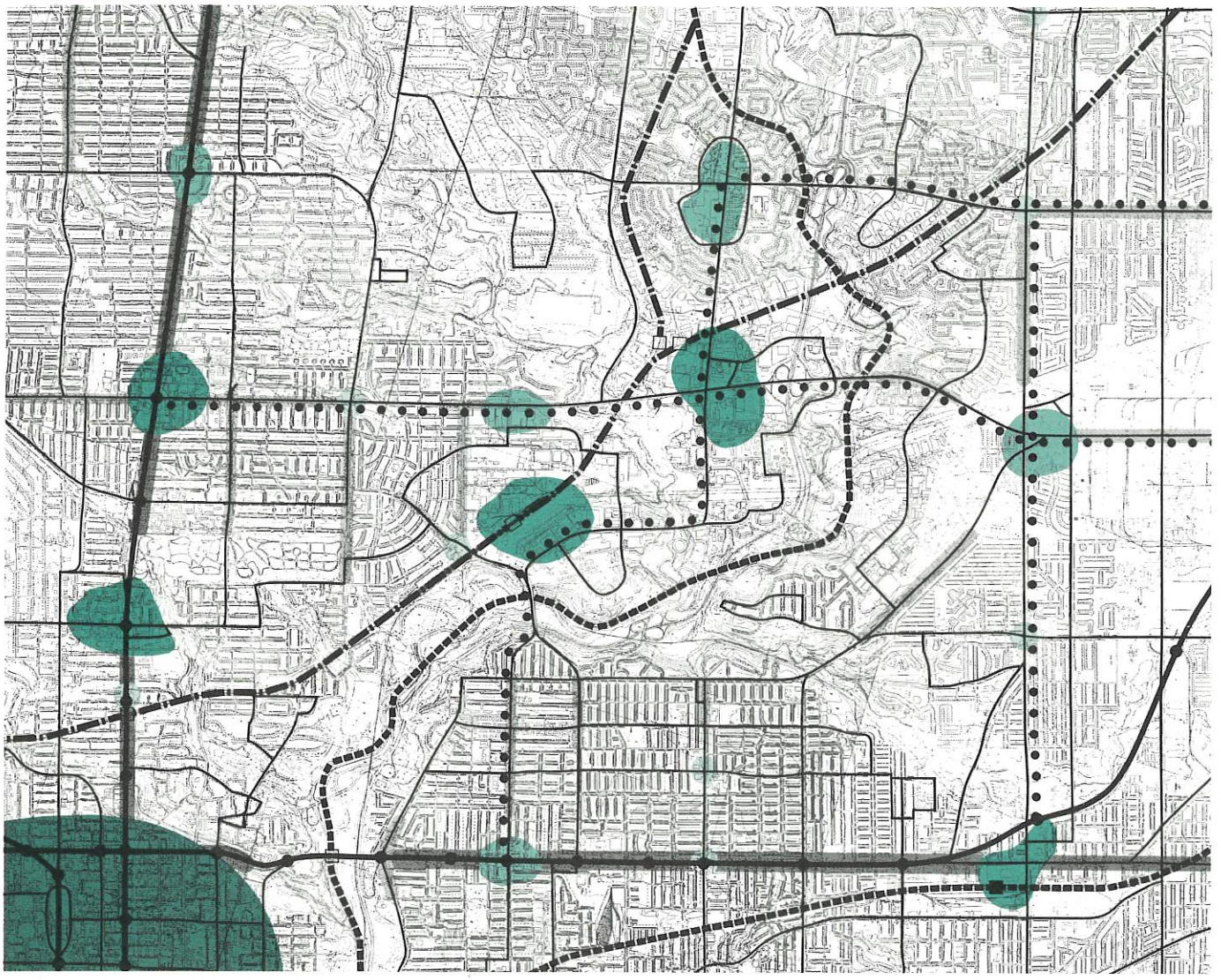
15 Low Density Corridors
Low density corridors are serviced at a minimum by frequent, moderate capacity transit vehicles such as buses or streetcars.

16 Medium Density Corridors
Medium density corridors are serviced at a minimum by frequent, intermediate capacity transit vehicles in their own right-of-way, such as LRTs or buses, or advanced light rail (such as the Scarborough RT). They may also be serviced by subways with stop spacing of less than one kilometre.

Infill Areas

A final category of reurbanisation includes those areas which do not fall into any of the categories above, and which when reurbanised will not represent concentrations of urban development, but which are nonetheless areas to be reurbanised. Such cases represent more an extending or "infilling" of the urban fabric where redevelopment opportunities exist. An example of this type of area might be an obsolete industrial site within an existing residential fabric. Because they are indeed "infill" areas, their size and location cannot be defined in the same way that they can for *centres* or *corridors*. However, some of the general Guidelines outlined below will apply to such areas, including Guidelines respecting minimum use mix, minimum gross reurbanisation densities, and urban design.

Major transit routes are much more closely spaced in inner Metro, providing better transit accessibility than in outer Metro.

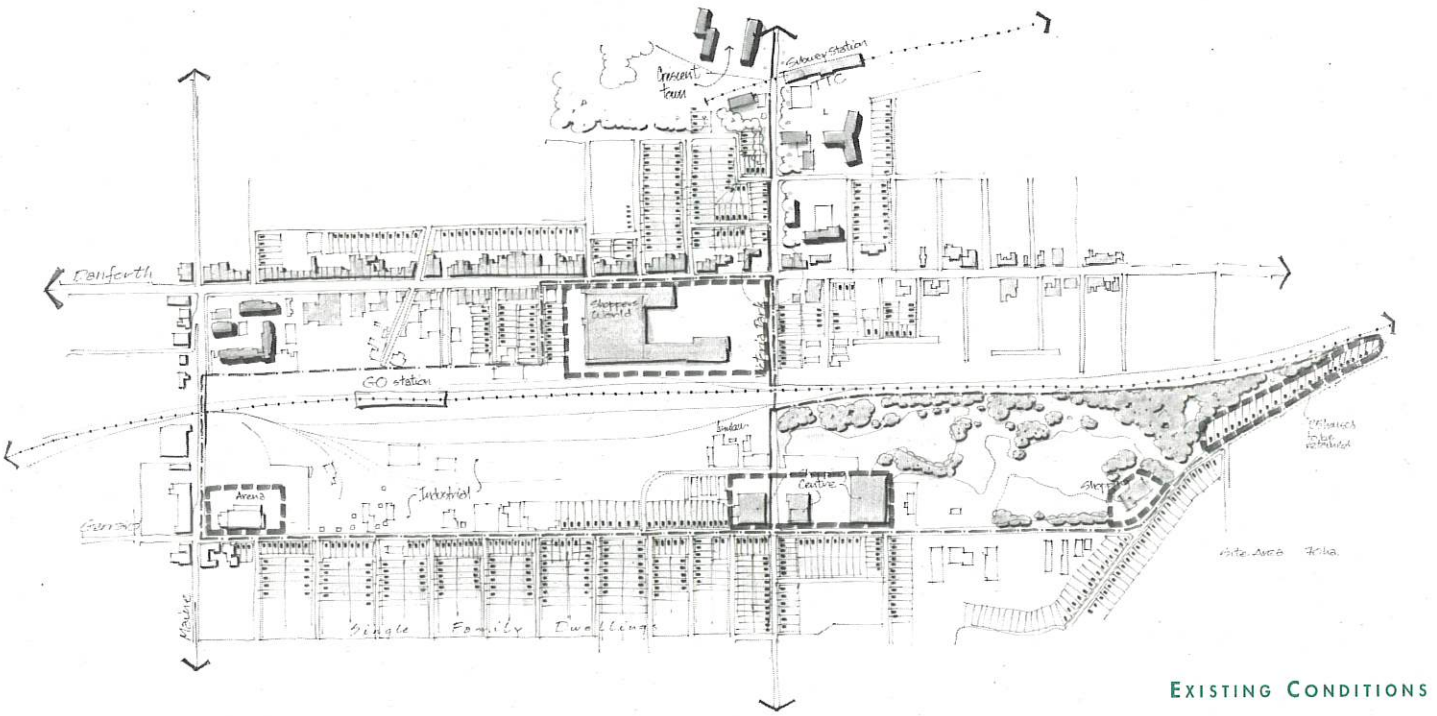


- Low Density Corridor
- Low Density Centre
- Med Density Corridor
- Med Density Centre
- High Density Centre
- Major Metro Centre

Designated transit corridors, and the level of anticipated transit service, are assumed to be laid out in the new Metro Official Plan. For this exercise, we have assumed a hypothetical transit system for the purposes of illustrating the application of these Guidelines only.

The illustration shows a pattern of centres and corridors that could emerge over the long term as a result of the application of the Guidelines. The location and type of centre or corridor is closely tied to the availability of transit.

APPLYING THE GUIDELINES

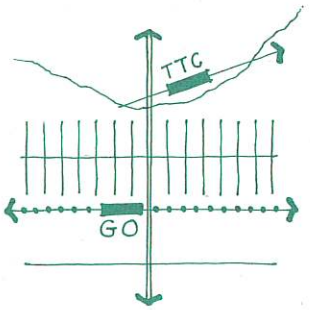


EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Victoria Park and Danforth site has a large amount of land available for redevelopment, including a shopping centre with at-grade parking, vacant and underutilised industrial areas. The large number of holes in the urban form of this area and a location within three municipalities has not supported the creation of a recognized neighbourhood related to the intersection of these two important Metro thoroughfares. There is however an area of approximately 70 hectares that could be developed.

The area is extremely well serviced by rapid transit; the Bloor-Danforth subway, and commuter GO train. Despite having this high level of transit service, we have assumed this site would not qualify as a major Metro centre. However, it does fit the characteristics of a *high density centre*.

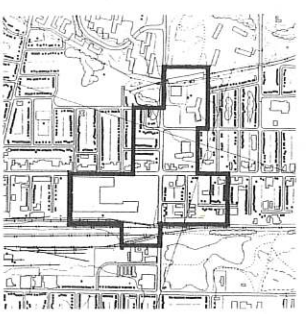
The centre should be defined so as to capitalise upon the availability of both subway and GO. The potential for an intermodal transportation node can be realised by relocating the GO train platform. The GO station has been moved eastward to Victoria Park, in order to make it more accessible to the Danforth/Victoria Park intersection, and to forge a closer connection between the GO station and the subway stop to the north.



Victoria Park and Danforth will naturally form a focal point for the high density centre, in the same way that Yonge and St. Clair do. The centre should be defined so that this intersection can assume a position of prominence.

Finally, the rail corridor constitutes a barrier and dividing line between two very different types of area. North of the corridor there are large scale developments, major arterial roads and high rise buildings. The area south of the corridor is characterized by a much smaller grain of low-rise residential neighbourhood.

Based on these considerations, the centre has been delineated as shown in the illustration. The node is located primarily north of the rail corridor. The boundary extends to the south near the relocated station in order to capture the excellent transit accessibility at this point. Most of this 27 hectare centre includes areas located south of the Danforth that are currently underutilized. North of the Danforth, the boundary is defined by existing residential areas. Except for the small parcel near the GO station, the area to the south of the train corridor is not included in the centre. Rather, this area would be considered an *infill area*, extending the fabric of the existing neighbourhood northward.



c

What is the appropriate mix of uses?

Guidelines for the Reurbanisation of Metropolitan Toronto

Mixed Use

Before the spread of the automobile in North American cities, the fabric of urban areas tended to be very finely mixed, comprised of uses of all kinds in close proximity to one another. The automobile opened up vast new areas for urbanisation, allowing people to live much farther from their place of work. Thus were born the first low density auto-oriented suburbs. In Metro and beyond, there are many examples, including Willowdale or Don Mills.

AVERAGE LENGTH OF COMMUTES
(miles)

	1977	1983
Information workers:	7.5	6.0
Industrial workers:	7.0	8.0

Length of commute for industrial workers has increased while for those working in information industries it has decreased. Opening up locations where clean, small scale industries can locate could counteract this trend.
Source: Kumar

PERCENTAGE OF WORK TRIPS BY WALKING IN SOME NORTHERN CITIES

Copenhagen:	**32%**
Stockholm:	**21%**
Zurich:	**21%**
Frankfurt:	**27%**
Metro Toronto:	***6%***

Source: *Newman & Kenworthy (1980 data).*

In the auto age, the separation of land uses became an obsession with urban planners, transportation planners, builders, and residents alike, to the point where zoning even prohibited corner stores from residential areas. As the environmental consequences of this pattern of urban living are being recognised (such as air pollution and global warming), and as the quality of life implications become clear (we spend more and more of our valuable time commuting ever longer distances to work), it is valid to question the underlying rationale for the separation of uses.

A closer mixing of different uses within reurbanisation areas has many important benefits. From an environmental perspective, it is essential for origins (say the home) and destinations (say a shop, or school, or workplace) to be closer together, ideally within walking or cycling distance. If they are not sufficiently close, then walking will not be possible. A mix of uses, on main streets or arterials say, also promotes the vitality of an area, and improves safety by having more activity at all times of the day and night, and more "eyes on the street". It also strengthens a sense of local community, by providing local opportunities for residents to work, shop, or take time off in their own neighbourhood. Employment and residential uses together can better support local businesses, increasing the diversity of services available.

While some uses clearly are not compatible with some others, particularly heavy industry, noxious, or noisy uses, many new industries are small in scale and clean. Industries which meet "good neighbour" environmental criteria regarding noise or emissions should be permitted to be part of the local urban fabric. Unfortunately, such criteria do not exist at present and would have to be developed. But new industries are critical to the future diversity and vitality of the urban economy, and places must be provided for them. Furthermore, industrial workers especially have been subject to longer commutes as industry suburbanises. Putting more jobs closer to where industrial workers live can decrease their auto dependency.

Balance

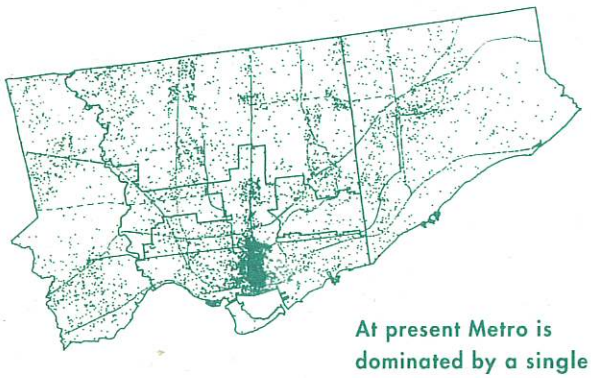
As we have become more sophisticated in thinking about mixing different land uses, the principle of mix has been taken further. Mixing land uses is a necessary but not sufficient condition for a better city and environment. The relative mix of uses, especially

employment uses and housing, is critical in achieving certain goals, particularly those relating to decreasing auto dependence.

In a perfectly "balanced" world, the number of workers who live in a neighbourhood or local area would be the same as the number of jobs available in that area. That way, theoretically, everyone could live where they worked, and could walk to work.

Of course, the real world is not like this. There are many households with two or more workers. And the existing pattern of urban development in Metro tends to separate residential areas from places of employment, so that very few people have the opportunity to live within walking or cycling distance of their workplace. A huge concentration of jobs exists in the Central Area, while most other regions of Metro are heavily residential and deficient in jobs.

Through reurbanisation, this situation can be improved upon. Reurbanisation presents an opportunity to put jobs where large supplies of housing currently exist, and to put housing where there are large supplies of jobs. This will provide Metro residents with greater opportunities to live closer to their place of work.



Employment 1986
1 dot = 250 jobs

At present Metro is dominated by a single central area employment concentration.

GUIDELINES

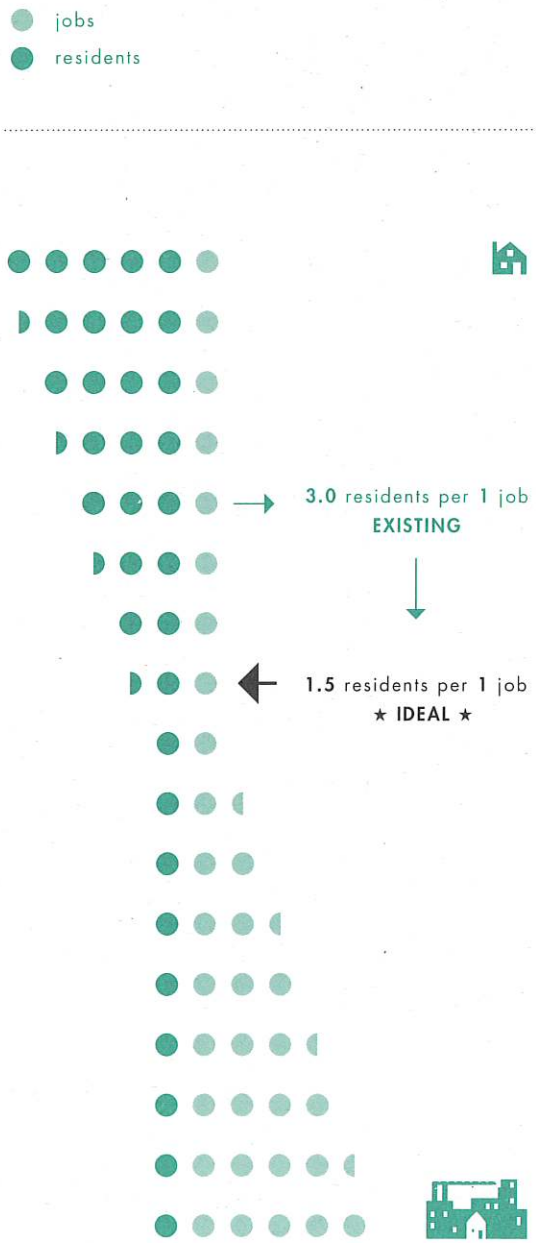
Mix of Uses

17 **Promoting mixed use development is the most fundamental land use principle. All *major Metro centres, centres, corridors* and *infill areas* should be mixed use, i.e. including both housing and employment uses, as well as community facilities and public spaces.**

18 **As a minimum condition, the reurbanisation of all *major Metro centres, centres, corridors* and *infill areas* should contain a minimum resident population: job mix of 90% residents and 10% jobs, or vice versa.**

19 **New industry and industrial uses which meet "good neighbour" environmental criteria should always be included in the definition of employment uses.**

The key to determining appropriate mix of uses for a given reurbanisation area is that reurbanisation should improve local balance, by moving the existing local resident/job mix toward the "target" balance of 1.5 residents per job, rather than away from it.



The idea of promoting "balance" between employment and housing has been adopted in jurisdictions, such as California, where air pollution from automobiles has reached unsustainable levels, people frequently spend two hours a day commuting, while some lower echelon jobs go unfilled because workers cannot reach them. Balance simply means achieving a good proportion of housing and employment within a given zone or area. Perfect balance would be achieved if there were a local job available for every worker living in a given zone.

In Metro, on average, every housing unit has about 1.5 members of the workforce. That means for an area to be balanced, there should be 1.5 jobs for every housing unit. We also know that, on average, every housing unit has 2.2 people. So for Metro, ideal balance would be achieved if every area had proportions of 2.2 resident population and 1.5 jobs, which can be more simply expressed as 1.5 residents per job.

But what zone or area should balance be achieved in? The Guidelines suggest that balance should first be sought at a local level, in order to promote walking and cycling as a top priority. By improving the balance within local areas, not only is the need to commute long distances to work reduced, but there are more opportunities for people to work within their local area, strengthening the sense of community.

General Balance Parameters

Major Metro Centres

The anticipated resident and job growth in Metro is itself not balanced – 300,000 new residents and 400,000 new jobs means a resident to job ratio of less

than one resident per job (0.75 to 1), compared to the "target" of 1.5 to 1. From a balance point of view, there is a relative "surplus" of jobs. In the structure section, we noted the critical importance that a good portion of these jobs should be located where workers can reach them by transit, *major Metro centres* being the primary focus. *Major Metro centres* are therefore likely to be the kind of reubanisation area most weighted towards employment uses, though they will nonetheless contain significant amounts of residential uses as well.

Centres

Other areas are less likely to be weighted as heavily towards employment as *major Metro centres*.

High density centres, however, may include some non-locally related employment (e.g. back office functions, data processing, etc.) in addition to employment related to serving the local population (i.e. retail, restaurants, services, recreation, etc.). The balance in *high density centres* may therefore also be weighted towards employment, though not likely to the same extent as *major Metro centres*.

Other centres are intended to fulfill a role primarily as local centres and community focuses. As a general principle, the emphasis on employment will decline in *medium density centres*, and fall again in *low density centres*.

Improving Local Area Balance

Within the framework set out in Guidelines 22-25, the specific mix of uses for a given reurbanisation area is determined by referring to the existing mix of uses in the area around the

GUIDELINES

Balance

20 **The "balance" or relative mix between employment-related uses and residential uses at specific locations is critical to achieving the goals of reurbanisation. For Metro Toronto, the target level of "balance" is defined as 1.5 residents for every job.**

21 **It is unlikely that this "target" balance can actually be achieved in many local areas, given high existing levels of local imbalance. What is important, however, is that reurbanisation improve the existing local area balance. That is, reurbanisation should move the existing local resident / employment ratio towards 1.5 residents per job, rather than away from it.**

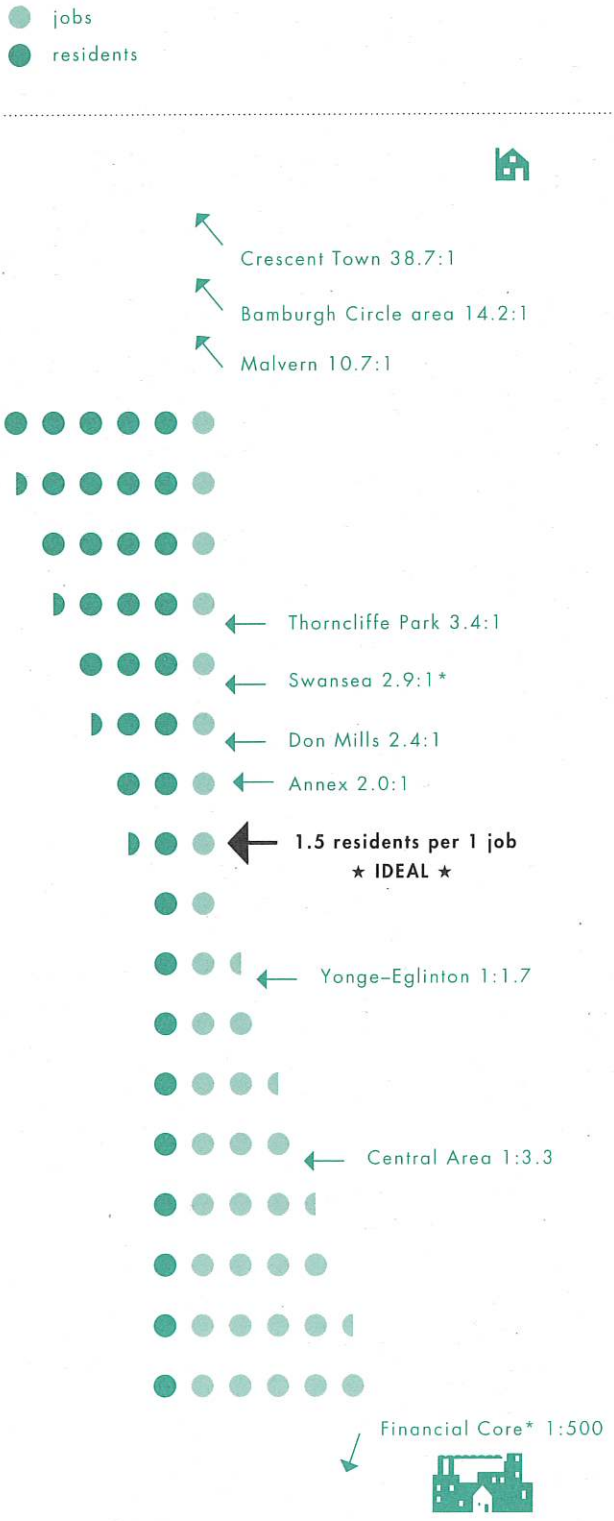
22 **As a general principle, the emphasis placed upon employment will be greatest in *major Metro centres*, and next greatest in *high density centres*, and will decline as one proceeds down the "urban hierarchy" of reurbanisation areas to *medium density centres*, *low density centres* and *corridors*.**

23 **The use mix in *major Metro centres* should be most heavily weighted towards jobs, i.e. it will be appropriate in these locations to have a resident to job ratio of less than 1.5 persons per job.**

24 **The use mix range in *high density centres* can also be weighted toward jobs, with a resident to job ratio of less than 1.5 persons per job.**

25 **The appropriate balance ratio in other *centres* and *corridors* will vary, depending upon existing local area balance. In heavily residential areas, an employment component should be introduced. In heavily employment-oriented areas, a residential component should be introduced.**

Residents / Jobs balance in some areas of Metro today



Source: Special Measurements and SPAC data, Metro Planning Dept., 1988 data.
*1986 data, based on traffic zones.

centre or *corridor*. In heavily residential areas, reurbanisation should introduce some jobs. In areas dominated by employment, reurbanisation should introduce residential population.

What area or "balance zone" should be referred to in order to determine the existing level of balance? To promote walking, balance should occur within an area represented by a radius of 1 kilometre from the centre or corridor – equivalent to a 10 minute walk.

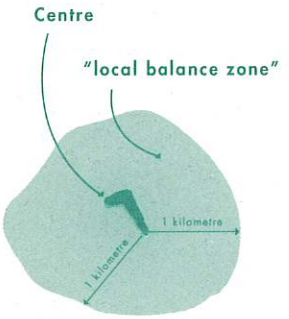
Data regarding the number of jobs and population within a given area can be approximated by using Metro's traffic zone data, or census tract data. Municipal sources may also be available.

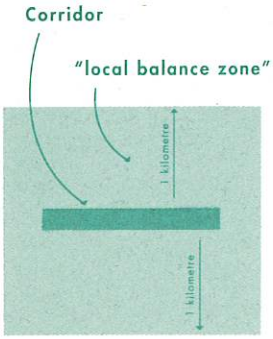
In most cases, the existing mix will provide a minimum standard, above which local balance will be improved, and below which it will be worsened. For example, if the existing local balance zone has four residents per job, reurbanisation must have four or less residents per job to maintain or improve the existing situation. Ideally, however, it would have a higher proportion of jobs than the existing, to improve the local area balance, not just maintain it, say two residents per job.

Many areas of Metro are at present extremely unbalanced. In balance zones which are very heavily residential, it would not be unreasonable for new development to be heavily weighted toward employment. For example, some areas in Metro have a mix as high as 30 residents per job. In such cases, it would be warranted for reurbanisation to strongly emphasise employment uses, so long as there was not such a large amount of new development that it would actually swing

the balance of the area past the "ideal" balance, and so long as the *centre* or *corridor* itself did not become a single-use district. In most cases, the number of jobs and/or residents to be added to an area through reurbanisation will be quite small compared to the existing population and jobs, and such an outcome is not likely.

To illustrate, say the balance zone for a centre had an existing population of 15,000 residents, and 500 jobs (30 residents per job).





In order to achieve the "ideal" balance in the zone, almost 10,000 jobs would be required in the centre (moving the ratio to 1.5 residents per job). The reurbanisation of local *centres* and *corridors* is not likely to involve such a large amount of new development and new jobs. In such a case, it is more important simply to make sure the mix in the balance zone is improved, as in reality, it may not be possible for the ideal to be achieved. The same logic applies to an existing area that is heavily employment-oriented.

In some cases, it may be appropriate to look beyond the area defined by walking distance as the basis for balance. This will occur primarily with reurbanisation areas whose areas of influence are not just local, and which are likely to draw people or workers from a larger catchment area. This

GUIDELINES

26 **The appropriate residential/employment mix is determined on a local area basis, in order to promote walking and cycling. The area of reference or "balance zone" is defined by walking distance, a radius of approximately 1 kilometre from the reurbanisation area.**

27 **In certain instances a wider balance zone may be considered for the purposes of determining balance. This would occur primarily:**

- **Where the reurbanisation area plays a strategic or more than local role, particularly major *Metro centres* and *high density centres;***
- **Where benefits of balancing based on a wider area outweigh benefits of balancing based on a local area.**

wider-area consideration will therefore likely apply mostly to *major Metro centres*, and *high density centres*.

Using a wider area than that defined by walking distance to determine appropriate reurbanisation balance would make sense primarily where other important benefits can be achieved, which outweigh benefits achieved by balancing strictly at a local level. These benefits will consist primarily of shortening work trip lengths, improving the efficiency of use of the existing transit service, and promoting the use of transit over the automobile.

For example, capacity currently exists both on the subway and GO train routes – in counter-commuting directions. By putting the right kinds of uses in the right locations, this existing capacity can be used, and new development can be served by transit with no significant new transit investments required. This strategy will generally mean placing employment uses outside the Central Area, and residential uses within and near the Central Area.

It should also be noted that by exceeding the "ideal" local area balance in favour of employment, for example, the goals of promoting walking and providing a local centre or community focus will not be negated.

Mix of Housing Types

The idea of promoting "balance" is an important improvement to the general principle of mixing land uses. However, even balance, perfectly executed as described above, cannot guarantee that walking and cycling will be promoted, or trips will be shortened. In order for this to occur, the kinds of housing provided locally must be compatible with the kinds of jobs available, and vice versa. Providing luxury "executive" houses in a predominantly industrial area is not likely to result in the benefits associated with balance. To improve the likelihood of achieving these benefits, housing types would have to better match job types on a local area basis.

But these qualitative aspects of housing and employment cannot reasonably be controlled, especially through zoning, for example. A single building can adapt to many different types of businesses and jobs. Neither are housing stock and households static – conversion of houses can dramatically change local population composition over time. For these reasons, qualitative issues of matching type of housing with type of jobs and vice versa cannot be directed through guidelines. Rather, it is most appropriate simply to promote the idea of diversity – of housing type and employment type – on a local area basis, to reinforce the benefits of balance.

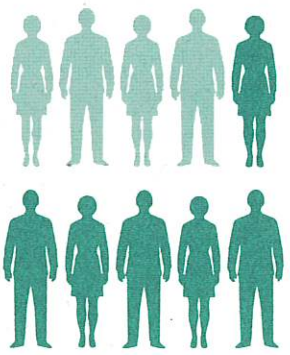
There are other compelling reasons for promoting diversity. In recent years in Metro, housing prices have increased substantially, placing home ownership well beyond the means of middle income citizens. As a result, we have seen an exodus to the outlying regions of those in search of affordable housing.

At the same time, the economy has undergone a dramatic restructuring, with the permanent loss of many well-paying industrial as well as other types of

jobs. Taken together, these trends represent a potential for Metro to become a more socially and economically stratified city in years to come, with the middle tier of the urban population diminishing.

The cultural, linguistic, religious and racial diversity of the metropolis is also expected to increase. These parallel but unrelated processes of increasing cultural or linguistic diversification, combined with a potentially more polarised urban social structure could represent a perilous situation. Integration of all social groups, and maintaining a diverse economy with a full range of jobs within Metro will be paramount. An important component of this will be physical integration, providing for diversity, integration, interaction and community expression within local areas.

One way of doing this is to ensure diversity of housing types within each local area. This will not only promote integration, but improve community stability. For example, reurbanisation in the Leaside area of East York has introduced a new, smaller housing unit type to the periphery of that single-family dwelling community. This has permitted many of the older local residents to move into more suitable housing while remaining in their community.



In 1990, nearly 40% of Metro's population was born outside Canada.

GUIDELINES

Mix of Housing Types

28 **Reurbanisation should aim to achieve a mix of housing unit types and sizes within local areas, including a portion of affordable or intrinsically affordable housing.**

29 **Emphasis should be placed on providing affordable housing in all locations throughout the Metropolitan Region.**

APPLYING THE GUIDELINES

1 Determining existing local area balance.

An estimate of the existing resident population to employment mix can be obtained using Metro's traffic zone data. Using data from surrounding traffic zones, the existing local population near Victoria Park and Danforth is 63,000, and the existing number of jobs is 10,000. This translates into a resident to job ratio of 6 to 1. The target balance level for Metro is 1.5 residents per job. New development must therefore occur at a ratio of 6.0 residents or less per job, in order to make sure that the existing level of balance is not worsened. The area is heavily weighted toward residential use.

2 Determining existing wider area balance.

As a *high density centre*, this area will represent a significant concentration of employment whose area of influence will extend beyond the local area. The benefits of examining the reurbanisation area in its larger context should be brought into consideration. Given the high level of existing transit service to this area, and its location outside the central area in a predominantly residential part of Metro, it represents an excellent location for a concentration of employment. For Scarborough residents, who can reach the site by GO train or subway, the area could provide a much needed alternative employment concentration to the central area, substantially shortening trip lengths. For central city residents, a job concentration at this point would make better counter-flow use of existing transit facilities and capacity. In such a case, there are significant benefits to be realised from placing emphasis on employment in this location.

3 What are the general mix parameters for the reurbanisation area?

As a *high density centre*, the general parameters suggest the mix for this reurbanisation area is likely to be weighted toward employment, i.e. could be less than 1.5 residents per job.

4 Conclusions

In view of the benefits of increasing the employment component, an aggressive approach which emphasises employment is appropriate here, indicating a mix less than the 1.5 residents per job. A ratio of one resident per job could be supported here, or even a greater employment focus say 0.75 residents per job.

Introducing new housing types on the periphery of existing residential areas like this one in Leaside, can promote social integration and community stability.

D

What is the appropriate overall density level?

Guidelines for the Reurbanisation of Metropolitan Toronto

The density, or the intensity of urban use for a given amount of land area is related to a number of important environmental and community building objectives. The approach to density, and the specific density numbers described below have been determined in order to achieve a number of goals. Three of these are especially important: reducing auto dependency, creating a livable built environment, and ensuring diversity of buildings, living and work environments.

There are three fundamental ideas behind reducing auto dependency. The first of these is to promote walking and cycling as viable means of urban transportation. This means achieving certain minimum overall densities in reurbanisation areas. Secondly, overall densities should be high enough to support transit service, and encourage a high modal split in favour of transit use. Finally, the approach outlined below ties the overall density in a reurbanisation area to the level of transit service provided there. For example, a subway has about ten times the capacity of a bus or streetcar. Reurbanisation areas served by subway should therefore have overall densities that reflect this significant differential in capacity and accessibility.

These goals should never be achieved at the expense of a high quality built form and urban environment, however. The density levels recommended below are compatible with built forms suited to the reurbanisation area's position in the urban hierarchy, it's location, and surrounding context.

It is also important to achieve a range of building forms and urban environments that will support a wide range of economic activities – from industrial workshops to corporate headquarters, and a full choice of housing type and environment – from low-rise townhouses to truly urban high rise living in *major Metro centres*.

Higher overall densities also bring the possibility for improved quality of life, better local amenities, a more diversified economy and opportunities, and a more vibrant urban life.

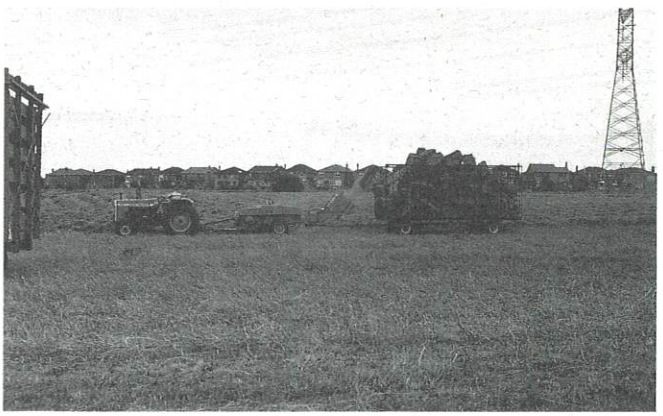
The approach outlined below builds upon the Guidelines outlined to this point, encouraging an appropriate mix of housing and jobs at specific locations. Because of the many benefits associated with better jobs/housing balance (fewer auto trips, shorter auto trips, use of counter-commuting transit capacity etc.) areas which have an appropriate use mix can sustain higher densities than those which do not. For this reason, the overall densities permitted are somewhat higher than those that may normally be prescribed for areas planned more conventionally.

A more detailed discussion of the rationale behind the density numbers can be found in the companion report.

Existing Gross Densities of Some Areas in Metro

Corridors *Portions of:*	Residents and Workers per Hectare
Bayview	**150**
Mt. Pleasant	**175**
Victoria Park	**200**
Danforth	**500**
Yonge St.	**250-500**
Bloor	**500**
Centres	
Yonge / St. Clair	**350-400**
Yonge / Eglinton	**400-450**
Central Area	**450**
Financial Core*	**1800**

Source: Special runs, Metro Planning Department, 1988 data.
*Source: Traffic zone data, Metro Planning Department, 1986



Maximising densities within Metro will reduce pressure for development of greenfields sites outside of Metro.

Gross Reurbanisaton Density

Reducing auto dependence and creating a diversity of places within the metropolis are questions of density most appropriately addressed at a more macro level, not on a site – specific basis.

A measure of the intensity of urban activity at a larger geographical scale is appropriate, in this case for a given *major Metro centre, centre, corridor* or *infill area* within Metro. Traditionally, a "population per hectare" measure has been used at this macro scale, which captures only residential population and not employment. A premise of the approach outlined in the Guidelines is that in making decisions regarding the nature of reurbanisation, employment uses and residential uses cannot be considered in isolation from one another. A new measure of density, one which captures both employment and residents is therefore proposed: gross reurbanisation density.

Gross reurbanisation density is a measure of the number of residents and workers per hectare over a large area. A gross reurbanisation density of 100 residents and workers per hectare, for example, could be comprised of 75 workers and 25 residents. It applies at larger urban scales, and is used in these Guidelines at the overall level of a reurbanisation area – be it a *major Metro centre, centre, corridor,* or *infill area.* Areas devoted to public realm and development parcels are included in the land area basis.

If current low density, peripheral development patterns continue, 233,000 acres of greenfield land – equal to 1.5 times the size of Metro – will be urbanised in the GTA in the next 30 years.

Source: IBI

GUIDELINES

30 "Gross reurbanisation density" is a measure of the number of residents and/or workers per hectare.

31 The "gross reurbanisation density" measures apply to reurbanisation areas as a whole, that is, to the entire *major Metro centre, centre, corridor,* or *infill area,* including land area devoted to the public realm.

32 Within the parameters outlined below and in following sections of the Guidelines, densities should always be maximised, in order to accommodate the maximum number of residents and jobs within the already built-up area rather than on greenfields sites.

33 Low Density Corridors
The appropriate gross reurbanisation density in *low density corridors* is 100 to 125 residents and workers per hectare.

34 Medium Density Corridors
The appropriate gross reurbanisation density in *medium density corridors* is 200 to 250 residents and workers per hectare.

35 Low Density Centres
The appropriate gross reurbanisation density in *low density centres* is 125 to 175 residents and workers per hectare.

36 Medium Density Centres
The appropriate gross reurbanisation density in *medium density centres* is 250 to 350 residents and workers per hectare.

37 High Density Centres
The appropriate gross reurbanisation density in *high density centres* is 400 to 550 residents and workers per hectare.

38 Major Metro Centres
The appropriate gross reurbanisation density in *major Metro centres* is 700 to 1000 residents and workers per hectare.

39 General Density Provisions
It is of course likely that there will be some limited reurbanisation that will not fall into the categories of *corridors* or *centres,* such as *infill areas.* In order to support the possibility of transit, and to support walking and cycling, such reurbanisation should meet minimum densities. Gross reurbanisation densities of 80 residents and workers per hectare should be the minimum for all reurbanisation in Metro.

Gross reurbanisation densities can be applied to a reurbanisation area to estimate the total number of residents and total number of workers that might reasonably result in the long term when that area is reurbanised (including any existing resident or worker population that remains). It therefore provides a useful tool for transportation and transit planning, as well as the planning of other infrastructure such as parks or schools. After all, it is residents and workers which generate the need for such infrastructure, not floorspace per se. But it can also provide a basis to estimate the total amount of floorspace that will exist in the centre or corridor, as illustrated in "Applying the Guidelines."

Using the Density Guidelines

Density levels vary depending upon the type of reurbanisation area. They are highest in the *major Metro centres*, and lowest in *low density corridors*. In each case, a range is given for the gross reurbanisation density. For a particular reurbanisation area, the appropriate mix determined in Section C can be applied to the gross reurbanisation density figures, and multiplied by the total area of the *centre* or *corridor*, to give an indication of the total number of workers and residents that can be expected in the long term.

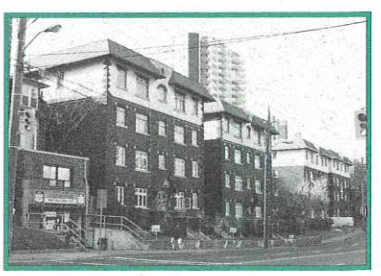
The Guidelines also provide site specific fsi ranges for each type of reurbanisation area, as discussed in Section G.

APPLYING THE GUIDELINES

As a *high density centre*, the overall gross reurbanisation density of the Victoria Park/Danforth centre should fall in the range of 400 to 550 residents and workers per hectare.

Using the gross reurbanisation densities and applying the balance ratio determined for the area, above, we can estimate the total number of residents and workers that could be anticipated in the centre over the long term when reurbanisation is complete. Above we determined that the resident to job ratio for the centre could be in the range of 0.75 residents per job (or 1.5 jobs per resident). Applying this ratio to the gross reurbanisation density of 450 residents and workers per hectare suggests a breakdown of roughly 270 jobs and 180 residents per hectare. Over the entire site area of 27 hectares, a total of about 7,300 jobs and 5,000 residents would result.

In turn, we could apply floorspace averages to these numbers to estimate the total amount of floorspace. Assuming 50 square metres of floorspace per resident, and 30 square metres per job, the total amount of floorspace in the centre would be about 450,000 sq.m..



E

The Urban Design Plan

Guidelines for the Reurbanisation of Metropolitan Toronto

Urban design is site planning at the level of the city. The combination of the public aspects of the city such as parks, streets and blocks, and sidewalks with the buildings and natural environment creates the wide variation in urban form that makes up Metro today. Many of these combinations represent systematic and repeatable relationships that can be successfully used over and over in many locations throughout Metro. In other cases site specific conditions require a unique response to achieve a successful urban form.

GUIDELINES

40 An urban design plan should be prepared in conjunction with the reurbanisation of *major Metro centres, centres, corridors,* and *infill areas.*

41 For the area to be reurbanised and in the context of its surroundings, an urban design plan should define, in three dimensions, the fundamental type of repeatable urban form that the area could exhibit after reurbanisation, created by the characteristics of:

- the pedestrian and vehicular circulation system;
- the open space system;
- the distribution of uses over the reurbanisation area;
- the distribution of net fsi densities by parcel or sub-area;
- the overall height and massing of the buildings;
- the relationship between street and building;
- the primary public entrances;
- the relationship between the type of proposed and existing building types;
- integration of new development with transit service;
- standards for micro-climate, including sun/shade, and wind conditions.

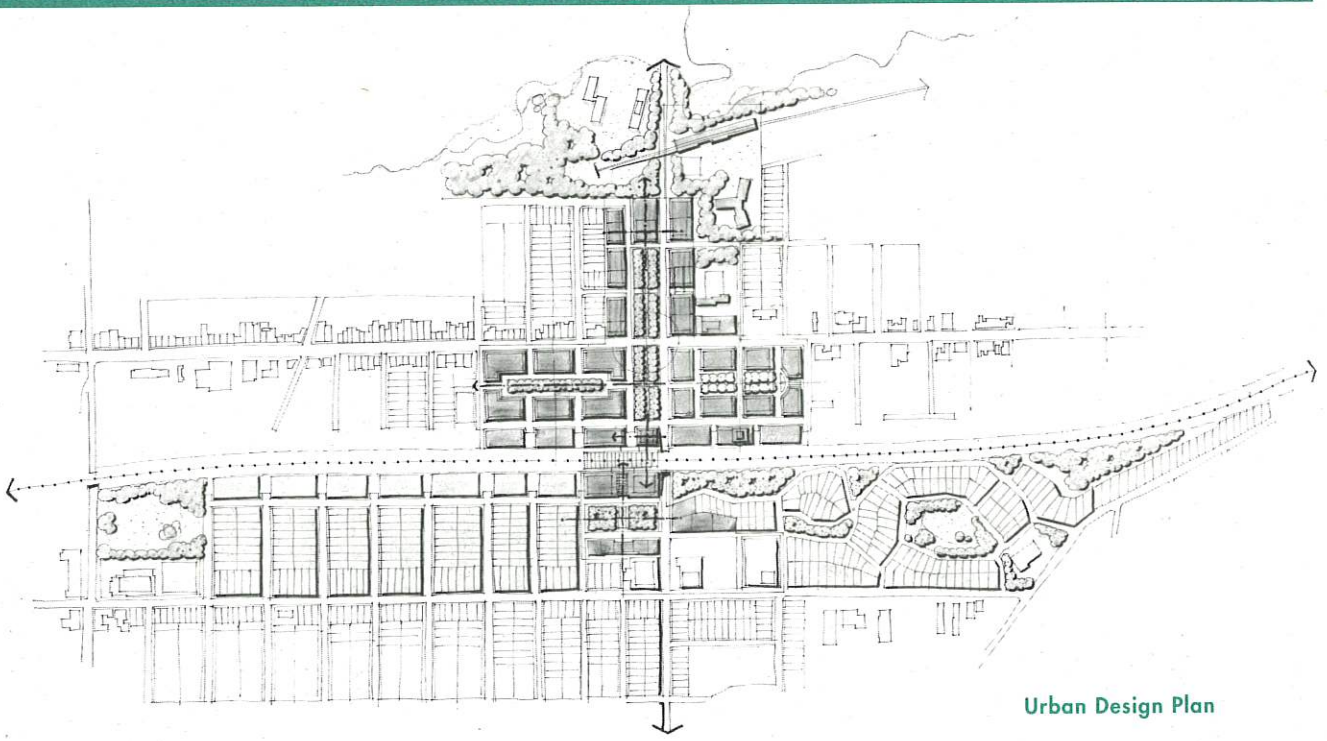
42 Within a given reurbanisation area, and as a general principle, employment uses should be placed closer to transit access points than residential uses. Exceptions may occur however, for example with respect to special needs housing.

Urban design directly conditions our experience of the city. It determines very real aspects of the urban experience, such as the amount of sun on a park, or the amount of wind on a sidewalk. In addition, it has significant but indirect impacts. It can contribute to a sense of community, for example by identifying the system through which 'main streets' are created so that they can be repeated and expanded. It can promote a safe urban environment, support walking and enhance the viability of transit.

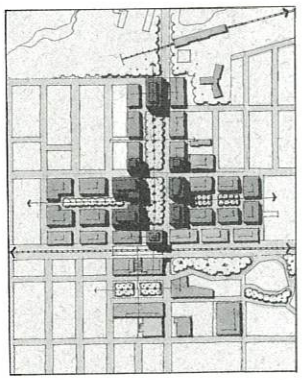
In this section we recommend that an "urban design plan" be prepared for all *major Metro centres*, *centres*, *corridors* and *infill areas*. An urban design plan is a three-dimensional plan for the important urban design aspects of an area, including the relationship with the surrounding context, creation or extension of the public realm, building heights, and so on.

The plan is a fundamental tool used as part of a proactive approach to guide the process of reurbanisation and make coordinated decisions about uses, densities, and built form on individual sites. It provides a clear framework for responding quickly and rationally to development applications. It will also help to ensure that reurbanisation results in a high quality public realm, with sufficient and well designed roads, pedestrian areas and parks.

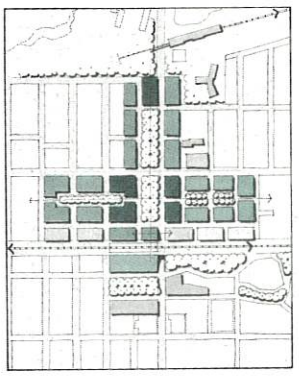
The urban design plans prepared to guide the evolution of reurbanisation areas will allow for interpretation of the general guidelines to respond to the special features of each area. This detailed, area-specific consideration will be especially critical in those areas of Metro which are more suburban in form and where reurbanisation should seek to create a form that is more compact and appropriate to local conditions. The guidelines are broadly descriptive; the principles they assert will require elaboration in an area-specific urban design plan.



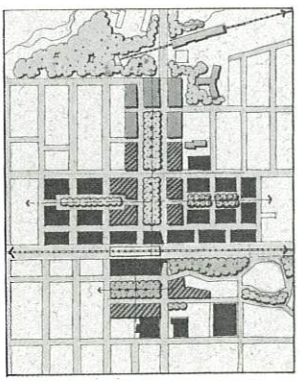
Urban Design Plan



Building Heights



Net Densities



commercial
mixed use
residential

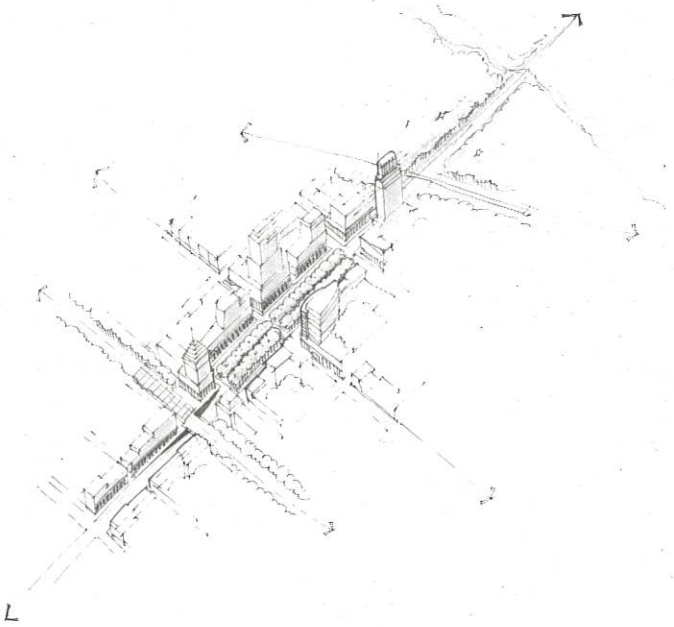
Land Use

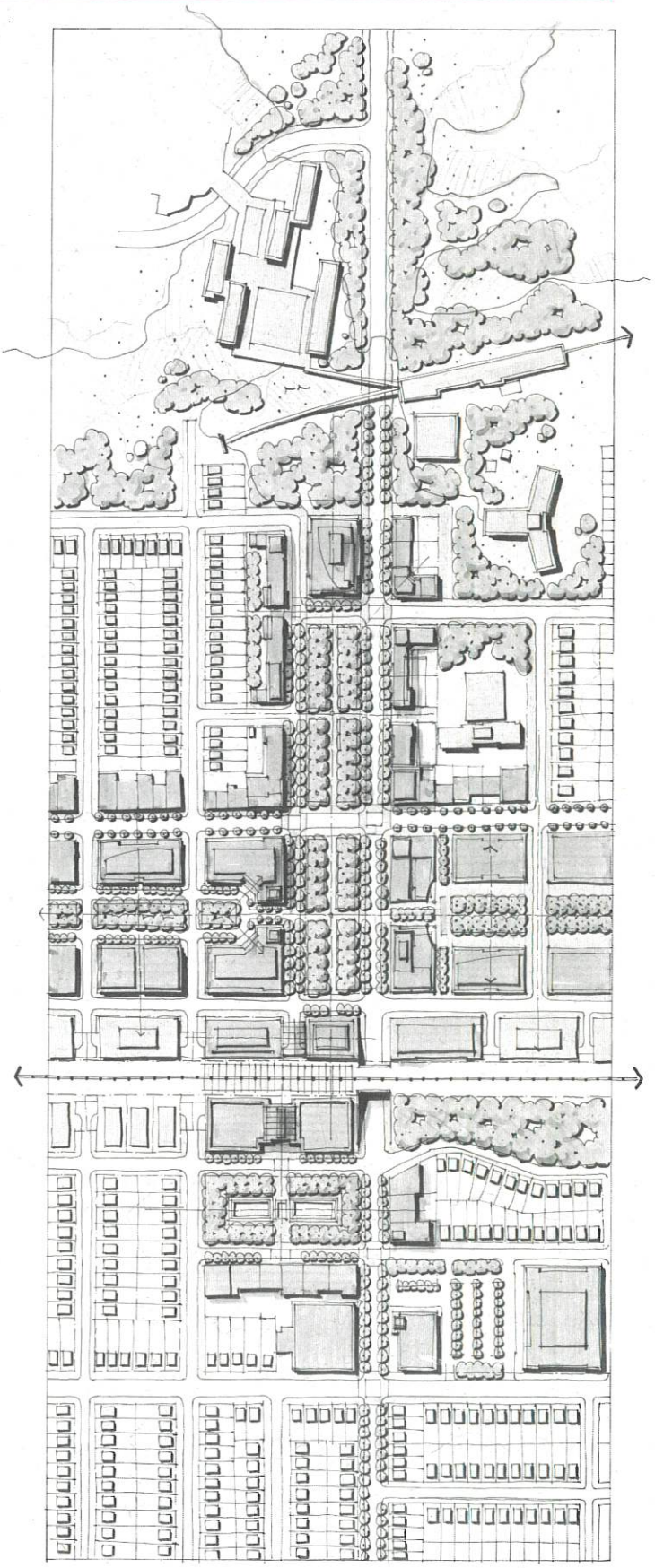
The urban design plan shows an overall concept for the area, including the infill areas located south of the rail corridor. The *high density centre* is located north of the rail corridor and along Victoria Park Avenue.

The plan is structured around the GO and subway stations. A major north-south open space is created along Victoria Park linking the two stations and creating one comprehensive development node served by transit. The relocated GO station is flanked by development parcels and becomes a focal point.

A new streets and blocks structure is established in order to rationalize the available space while providing identity to the area.

The area south of the Danforth provides an employment focus and includes offices and retail, with light industrial uses along the rail corridor. Mixed commercial/residential parcels are located along the main square. The perimeter of the main square is seen as a mixed-use area with an emphasis on height and density at the intersection of Danforth and Victoria Park. Danforth is reinforced as the main service corridor with street-related retail. Residential uses to the north ensure proper integration with the existing residential neighbourhoods. The overall result is a highly mixed area with a strong emphasis on employment.





In order to maximise accessibility to transit, employment uses are placed closest to transit stops, with mixed use buildings filling out the central square. Residential uses are placed next to the existing residential fabric, in order to make an appropriate transition between the centre and its surroundings.

Placing the densest buildings next to the transit stops also maximises accessibility to GO and the subway, by putting more people closer to the stations. Denser buildings are also appropriate around the central square. In general, fsi densities of 4X to 6X – in the upper end of the range permitted in *high density centres*, are placed at the centre, and diminish to 3X in the outer portions. Fsi densities have been kept low at the northwest end of the central park space, next to the existing low-rise neighbourhoods. The building heights follow a similar pattern to the site-specific densities, diminishing with distance from the middle of the centre.

F

The public realm

Guidelines for the Reurbanisation of Metropolitan Toronto

How much public realm is required?

When an area is to be reurbanised it usually means a considerable increase in the density or intensity of use. The reurbanised area will need to cater to more people and become the setting for a more complex order of urban life. A single-storey shopping centre and car park is quite a different place from an urban centre which includes housing, offices, workshops, community facilities and shopping.

GUIDELINES

43 The public realm consists of parks, streets, sidewalks and other open spaces. Included in the measurement of the public realm for any reurbanisation area is half of the width of local streets and arterials which may form the area's boundary. Expressways and other quasi-public areas, such as hydro corridors, are not counted toward the public realm as they do not expressly serve the reurbanisation area. In general, publicly-accessible private open space would not be counted toward the public realm.

44 The public realm created in the reurbanisation of an area should be dedicated to the municipality. Density should not be drawn from portions of the reurbanisation area which constitute the public realm and reapplied to the development parcels.

45 In *major Metro centres, centres,* and *infill areas,* the public realm should constitute a minimum of 30% of the total land area to be reurbanised. This figure includes public roads, parks, sidewalks and other publicly owned open spaces. Any existing public realm retained as part of the reurbanisation can be counted toward the 30%.

46 *Corridors* have a somewhat greater amount of public realm, as the amount of developable land has been strictly defined as a depth of one property, which generally means the street accounts for a higher share of the corridor's total land area. The public realm for corridors is ideally between 30% and 40% of its total land area. Existing public realm retained as part of the reurbanisation can be counted toward the 30% to 40%.

When such a process of reurbanisation takes place, it is vital to pay careful attention to the creation of a public realm which supports public activity and a sense of community. An adequate public realm of streets, sidewalks, parks and open spaces must be created.

The public realm plays a critical role in determining the quality of life in a city, in providing access to public amenities such as ravines or the waterfront, and in providing public places where social integration, interaction, and community building can occur.

In some redevelopment projects over the past few decades, streets, parks, boardwalks, or ravine edges have effectively been privatised, either through design, or indeed through private ownership.

An associated problem with redevelopment projects within Metro in the past has been that the developments are simply too dense; too big for their site. One source of this problem is that density is attributed to the entire or "gross" site to be redeveloped. When the streets and parks are laid out, the density from these areas is then applied to the development parcels, in addition to the density that is already permitted there.

This is an unpredictable process, in that the real net densities that result will depend upon the amount of roads and parks created on the site. Frequently, the resulting amount of density applied to the development parcels is simply too great, creating buildings that are too big or too tall.

When greenfields sites are urbanised for the first time through a Plan of Subdivision, the public realm is determined and dedicated to the municipality. No

An open grid street system

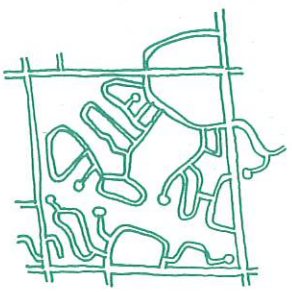
density is attributed to the public realm. Density applies only to the remaining development parcels. Such an approach creates greater certainty for the built form outcomes, ensures an adequate amount of public realm, and that roads, parks, and other urban elements are truly public.

The Guidelines below suggest that a similar approach be adopted for the reurbanisation of land. An adequate public realm would be determined for the *major Metro centre, centre, corridor* or *infill area* as a whole, and this land area would be subtracted from its total area. Net building densities would then apply to the remaining development parcels. The concept of "gross fsi", that is, of a coverage density applying to a whole site before the public realm had been subtracted, would no longer exist. This is a reasonable and fair approach when increases in density are being awarded.

The Guidelines further suggest a certain minimum portion of the total land area of a *major Metro centre, centre, corridor* or *infill area* be devoted to the public realm. The prescribed figures are based on research of the amount of public realm provided in different types of mature urban contexts in a number of areas across Metro.

Design of the Public Realm

We have already made the case above, that a high quality public realm be included in reurbanisation areas. This public realm must be more than the left over spaces between building projects. It becomes a permanent feature of the city and must be designed to endure over a long period of time. In most urban areas, individual



A closed street system

GUIDELINES

47 Street systems should be designed to facilitate integration, having the open, accessible qualities of a grid system. This is achieved by making frequent connections with the surrounding street system, creating blocks shaped to facilitate buildings fronting on streets and pedestrian circulation.

48 The public realm should serve to knit a site into the surrounding urban fabric, connecting streets, creating pedestrian linkages and assuring access to public parks and open spaces.

49 Building entry should directly face the street in a visible and accessible manner to allow for orientation of the building to the public realm and to create the built-in security of "eyes on the street". Reverse lot frontages should not be permitted.

50 A variety of parks and open spaces is fundamental to the creation of a livable urban environment. Parks, natural preserves, public gardens, small squares, allotment gardens and children's play parks combine to develop a hierarchy of public open spaces that creates diversity and visual interest in an urban environment.

51 To be fully integrated as a component of the public realm, significant park spaces should have frontage on and be highly visible from a public street.

52 Parks, plazas and other open spaces should be defined by the urban fabric around them. The safety and definition of open spaces is improved if buildings face onto them.

buildings will change several times in relation to a relatively stable public realm. That public realm has a lot of common characteristics that will reappear in all parts of Metro.

There have been some problems with the treatment of the public realm in Metro in the past. Some redevelopment projects in Metro "turn their backs" on the surrounding area, and create an inward-looking, detached world. "Reverse lot frontages", where the back of lots face the main street, are an example of this.

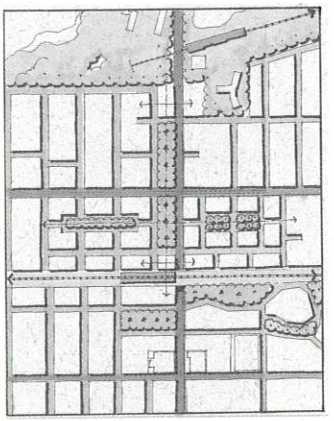
The pattern of streets and blocks in many areas, with limited points of entry to a block and curvilinear street patterns, also inhibits the integration of an area with its surroundings. Walks to transit stops or stores are lengthened, and transit vehicles can find it difficult to manoeuvre the winding streets.

A more open, integrated pattern of streets and blocks integrates neighbouring portions of the city, reduces walking distances, and promotes accessibility to transit stops. There is a growing feeling that an open grid of public streets actually has less traffic congestion than the limited access, closed street systems. Building entrances with direct access to the street promote safety, and make walking more interesting.

Parks, plazas and open spaces play a critical role in the creation of the distinct character of a neighbourhood - so much so that many existing neighbourhoods carry the name of the adjacent public open spaces. Open spaces can also provide a means of linking a reurbanisation area with the surrounding community.

The size, use, location, street frontage and type of buildings surrounding an open space system are a critical component of the urban design plan for an area of reurbanisation.

APPLYING THE GUIDELINES

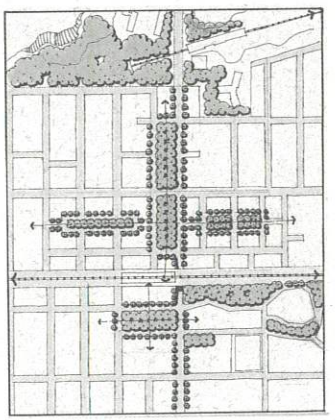


Streets and blocks

As a centre, the general principle of allocating a minimum of 30% of the land to be reurbanised to roads and parks applies.

Because of its prior use as industrial land serviced by rail, there is virtually no public realm in place in the existing area. A new system of streets, sidewalks and parks will have to be created as a framework for reurbanisation. An open street pattern facilitates accessibility to and within the centre, connects to the surrounding area, and picks up on the existing street pattern around the centre. The new system of streets and blocks proposed in the plan is a generous one, intended to give a strong sense of identity to the new centre. Overall, the public realm shown is about 40% of the total land area of the centre, surpassing the 30% minimum recommended in the Guidelines.

An urban design plan for the area must preserve and enhance all existing natural features. In addition, Victoria Park is shown as a park-like avenue, linking existing natural sites such as the ravines to form an overall park/open space system along a north-south axis. The central landscaped mall along Victoria Park Avenue provides for a distinctive framework for development at a higher density while providing both visual and physical amenity along its length.



The park system

G

Site-Specific Densities

Guidelines for the Reurbanisation of Metropolitan Toronto

In Section D, above, we outlined gross reurbanisation densities, stated in residents and workers per hectare, that would apply overall to the different types of reurbanisation area. This gross measure of density is appropriate at the macro scale, and is linked to goals such as promoting walking as a means of urban transportation or supporting the use of transit.

Within this gross reurbanisation density framework, the issue of building densities on individual development parcels appropriately becomes primarily a matter of urban design.

GUIDELINES

53 Within a reurbanisation area, a range of site-specific densities can be accommodated within the overall gross reurbanisation density figure. Net floor space index ("fsi") figures are provided for each type of reurbanisation area. Net fsi means that the density figures can be applied only to the development parcels; no fsi density is attributed to land in the public realm.

54 The appropriate floor space index density for any individual development parcel in a reurbanisation area will be determined on the basis of an urban design plan (Section E).

55 Low Density Corridors
Site specific density within *low density corridors* is 2X the area of the lot, net.

56 Medium Density Corridors
Site specific density within *medium density corridors* is 3X the area of the lot, net.

57 Low Density Centre
Site specific density within *low density centres* is 2-3X the area of the lot, net.

58 Medium Density Centres
Site specific density within *medium density centres* is 2-4X the area of the lot, net.

59 High Density Centres
Site specific density within *high density centres* is 3-6X the area of the lot, net.

60 Major Metro Centres
Site specific density within *major Metro centres* is 4-12X the area of the lot, net.

Building density ranges are provided in this section of the Guidelines for each type of reurbanisation area. These site-specific densities are consistent with the corresponding gross reurbanisation densities.

The site-specific density measure is the floor space index (fsi), which is the total amount of floorspace in a building divided by the net site area of an individual development parcel, that is, after the public realm has been subtracted. This measure indicates the minimum and maximum fsis which are anticipated for the various net development parcels within each *major Metro centre, centre* or *corridor.*

The distribution of net fsi densities within the reurbanisation area is determined on the basis of urban design considerations. The fsi density available upon any given individual development parcel will be determined by the urban design plan, the parcel's location within the reurbanisation area, and the other general urban design guidelines presented in this document. Most development parcels within a *major Metro centre* or *centre* may not be recommended for the highest fsi limits in the range.

The net fsi densities recommended are also consistent with the goals of creating a livable urban environment, and appropriate built forms. For example, site-specific densities of over 4X net coverage would be permitted only in *high density centres* or *major Metro centres*. Net fsi densities of over 6X would only be permitted in *major Metro centres*, that is, within only a very few locations in Metro.

APPLYING THE GUIDELINES

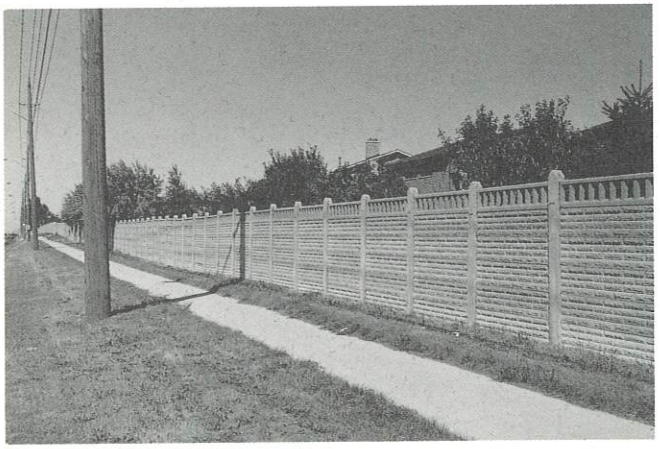
The net fsi densities are distributed so as to take advantage of transit access points, and to ensure a transition with the existing context. As such, the highest density buildings of 5X to 6X are placed in the most central and prominent positions, at the corners of Danforth and Victoria Park, and near the TTC and GO stations. Lower densities of 3X to 4X occur on the perimeter of the centre.

H

Pedestrian Environment

Guidelines for the Reurbanisation of Metropolitan Toronto

We have placed a great deal of emphasis in these Guidelines on promoting walking as a viable form of urban transportation, and have outlined measures to support this, including improving the mix of uses at the local level and ensuring adequate overall density levels. But these measures alone will not support an increase in walking if the system of sidewalks and walkways is not supported by sufficient activities or is unattractive, discontinuous, inaccessible or inconvenient.



Reverse lots and blank walls do not result in a high quality pedestrian environment.

There are many examples in Metro of higher density, mixed use places that do not support walking at all. Residents of areas surrounding the Scarborough Town Centre would be hard pressed to reach the centre on foot, as the environment is geared to cars, lacks sidewalks, and presents many obstacles to the pedestrian. This type of alienating walking experience is far less likely to be repeated on a regular basis.

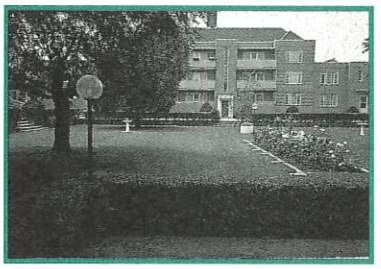
Part of the joy of walking is the appreciation of the environment and street-related activities that one is passing through. "Animation" or the enlivening of public and pedestrian space makes those places more attractive, more interesting, and safer. Animation depends upon providing land uses within or around public spaces which generate activity, and avoiding "dead" uses which do not. Animating uses include retail, restaurants, cultural amenities, recreational facilities, and offices. Providing residential uses in conjunction with other uses can contribute to street activity for a longer period of the day, as well as create a population base for service, retail and entertainment

uses at street level. Dead uses include parking lots, the rear of lots, and blank walls.

During the design process, consideration must be given to the physical image and position of a street in the urban hierarchy. Special conditions such as a centre landscaped median, multiple rows of tree plantings or extra wide sidewalks become permanent features in the urban environment and create a special neighbourhood or community identity.

Lighting, signage, special pavement treatments, and street furniture should be considered as finishing elements of the street infrastructure.

Not all pedestrian environments require the same treatment to provide a successful walking system in a neighbourhood. An area's urban design plan should delineate important pedestrian connections which link origins and destinations. It is important to remember that a great deal of the successful walking environment in the older areas of Metro is a simple, repetitive sidewalk system along the open grid of public streets.



GUIDELINES

61 Reurbanisation should stress improving the connectivity of places by pedestrian means, through a system of pedestrian linkages.

62 The quality of the pedestrian environment can be improved by attention to continuity, animating uses, and improving visual interest and activity of pedestrian spaces.

63 Maintaining the continuity and variety of a pedestrian environment is an important element of its attractiveness. The public realm and, in particular, public spaces should be surrounded by land uses which will enliven them.

64 The pedestrian environment of arterial roads could be substantially improved by encouraging street edge building.

65 Specific elements in streetscape design include:

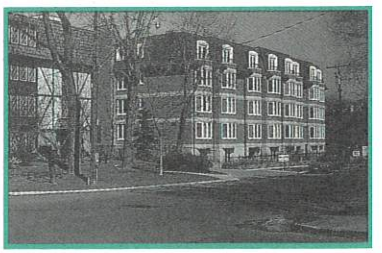
- provision of adequate sidewalks
- pedestrian scale lighting
- crosswalks and signalisation to encourage pedestrian movement
- street tree planting
- special features such as boulevards, medians and public art.

66 Special tree planting and street or landscape features should be considered in locations where a special community focus is appropriate.

67 In areas of significant pedestrian activity, consideration should be given to the requirement for weather protection devices such as canopies, awnings, arcades and colonnades.

APPLYING THE GUIDELINES

The new north-south linear park space connects the two transit stations at the north and south ends of the centre. Generous, treed sidewalks with weather protection provide a pleasant environment for the short walk between the two stations. Streets are lined with animating uses, including retail at grade.



1

Parking

Guidelines for the Reurbanisation of Metropolitan Toronto

The treatment of parking is important in many respects – it can contribute to or detract from the quality of the urban environment, it can promote or inhibit walking and the use of transit.

By separating land uses, surface parking increases walking distances, and can create an uninspiring urban environment. When surface parking is provided it should not be permitted to reduce the quality of the public realm. Buildings and the public realm, especially sidewalks, should be contiguous; parking lots should not separate a

GUIDELINES

68 Surface parking should not be placed so as to separate the public realm and building entrances.

69 Surface parking should not be permitted in park spaces.

70 Parking structures which face onto a street should be lined with active land uses at grade to enliven the public realm.

71 In determining parking requirements, the relationship between parking supply and transit use should be considered. In general, greater provision of parking will encourage auto use over transit. In areas of good present or future transit use, significantly reduced parking requirements could be considered.

72 In mixed use development, parking requirements may be reduced on the basis that the demand created by different land uses could share common facilities.

73 Entrances to surface parking or underground parking lots should be carefully controlled when they occur across a public sidewalk. In the case of shopping streets, vehicular access should occur from a rear laneway.

74 Street parking should be encouraged where it does not interrupt transit operations.

building entrance from the street and sidewalk. Parking should be located so as not the break this contiguity.

The availability of parking can encourage people to use their car instead of transit. The supply of parking provided in an area should take into account the future transit framework; if a good level of transit service is provided or will be provided in the future, the supply of parking can be reduced or eliminated, or the onus shifted to have the proponent demonstrate why any parking is neccessary. While the absence of surface parking is desirable in a mature condition, it may be necessary in locations of significant automobile use to develop a phased parking strategy as a part of the urban design plan for an area.

To this end, surface parking should not be allowed as a permanent use in those locations where transit alternatives currently exist or will exist in the future. Temporary surface parking policies can help in the initial phases of a reurbanisation proposal while allowing future development to remove the parking over time.

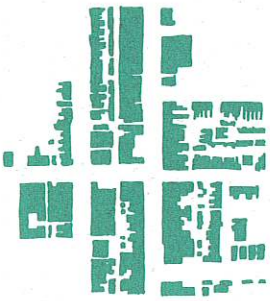
In determining appropriate levels for the supply of parking, consideration could also be given to the fact that by mixing different land uses which generally generate parking demand at different times of the day, the overall supply of parking can be reduced. For example, in a condominium and office development, office workers would require daytime parking while residents would require nighttime parking, suggesting that they could share some of the same parking facilities.

J

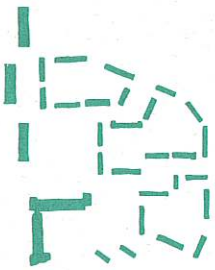
Fit and Transition

Guidelines for the Reurbanisation of Metropolitan Toronto

Some past redevelopment projects in Metro have resulted in very large or tall buildings, which are out of context with their surroundings. In part, this has been due to the use of "gross fsi" density measures, an approach which these guidelines suggest should be eliminated (Sections F and G). But in addition, local zoning controls have set many constraints, such as minimum setbacks or maximum lot coverage, which have encouraged high rise buildings.



Older areas of the city have high "coverage" buildings i.e., the building foot print takes up a large proportion of the lot.



Post-war buildings have often had low lot coverage like this area in Metro.

In other cases tall buildings were marketed for the long views they offered residents. Older areas of the city have high "coverage" buildings i.e., the building footprint takes up a large proportion of the lot. Often the view from these buildings is only good until another highrise occurs in close proximity. In many cases these high rise structures have nothing to do with the composition, scale or building type of the urban form around them.

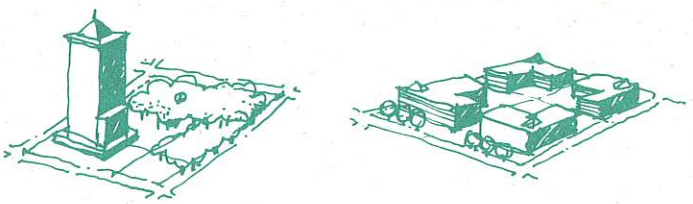
It is not possible, nor is it desirable to prescribe uniform building heights for reurbanisation areas that would be applied mechanically across Metro. In a very general way, however, the guidelines in this section suggest an alternative approach to the current practice of juxtaposing very high and very low buildings. The Guidelines suggest that much more extensive use be made of low (up to three storeys) to medium rise (four to eight storeys) buildings that, because they utilize a high coverage of the site, are higher density but not high rise.

A variety of building types can still be achieved within these parameters. The most suitable building type will be determined by location, context and use. One of the values of this type of building is a great ability to successfully integrate new development with the existing Metro urban structure.

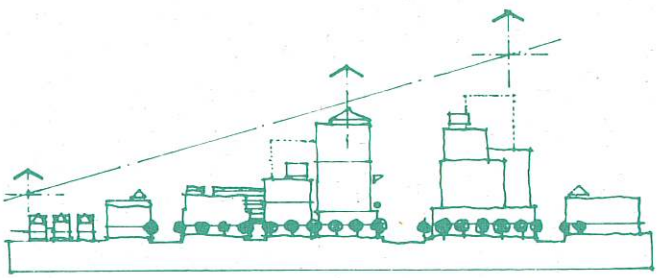
Tall buildings (over eight storeys) are not eliminated, but are restricted to a few appropriate locations, like the centres of reurbanisation areas, corner locations, or places of high transit accessibility.

Reurbanisation areas have been well defined in the preceding guidelines. Firm boundaries are necessary in order to create an orderly and sensitive transition into existing surrounding areas. A gradual transition in height ensures that new development is compatible with existing.

These guidelines should be used as principles to assist in the preparation of an urban design plan. In most cases great sensitivity to the specific location will be required to successfully create a transition into an existing community.



Net densities of 3X fsi can result in high rise or low rise buildings, depending upon the coverage.



There should be a gradual, consistent transition in building heights from a center or corridor to surrounding areas.

75 The height, size and typology (i.e. characteristics, fronts, backs, locations of entrances, etc.) of buildings introduced into an existing urban fabric should be compatible with what exists. This does not mean that they must be exactly the same size or have the same floorplates, but they should have proportions that do not result in an abrupt change and that do not "dwarf" the existing fabric.

76 In larger areas of reurbanisation, it is important that a transition in scale be achieved between the new development and the existing fabric. Taller buildings can be accommodated in appropriate locations, providing that there is a positive contribution to the urban fabric.

77 In reurbanisation areas bordering low-rise residential areas, residential uses will normally make a better transition use, and are most appropriate at the edge of reurbanisation areas.

78 The principles of built form which apply to reurbanisation in general should also apply to affordable housing, which should not be given additional height or density to make it work economically. The additional costs of this form of housing, if any, must be met through other mechanisms.

79 In the case of a new community focus which seeks to convey a specific image, different from the context, the project must be evaluated as to its impact on the existing physical character of the neighbourhood.

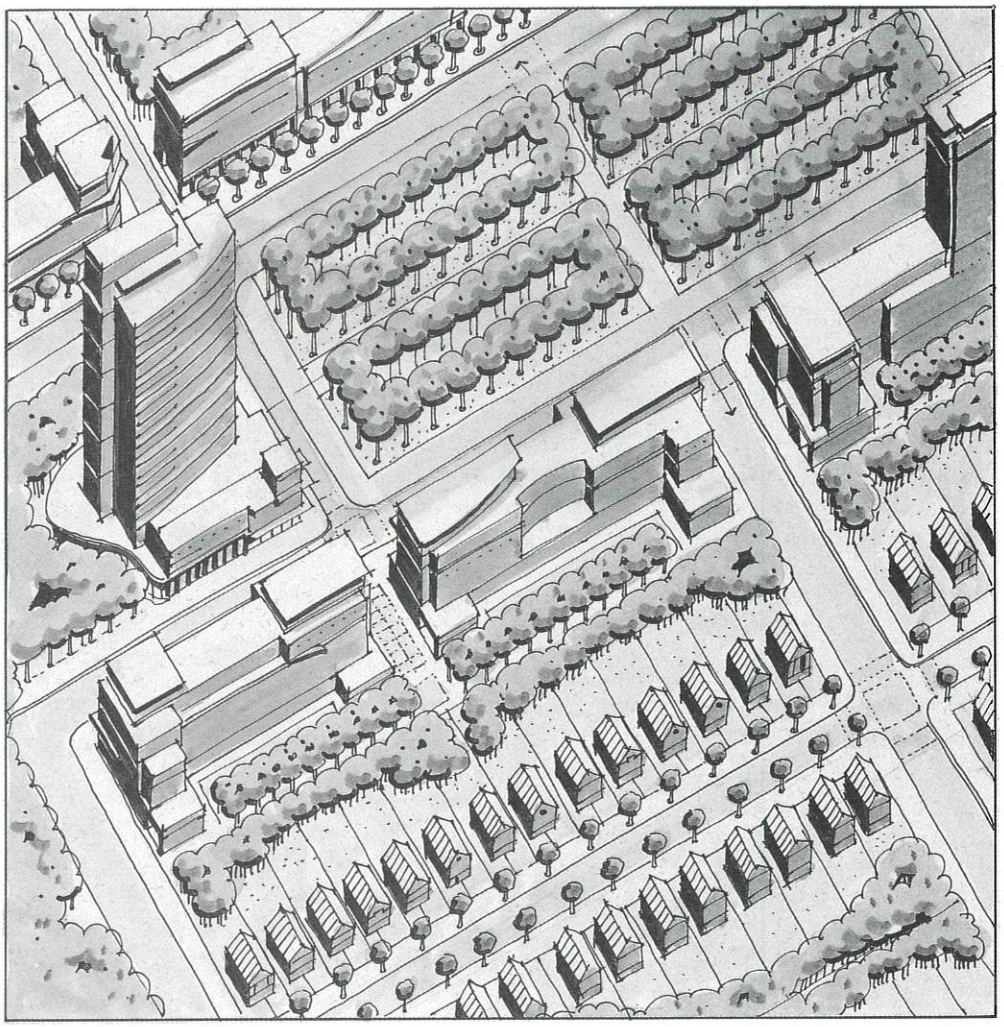
Within the parameters of a comprehensive urban design plan, the specifics of building transition will vary depending on the location within Metro.

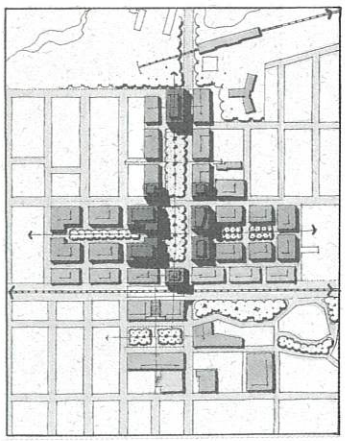
80 In low and medium density centres: Generally *low* and *medium density centres* should be composed of structures under 6 to 8 storeys. In order to create a transition, buildings should be limited in height when adjacent to existing low rise neighbourhoods. Immediately adjacent to low rise houses a height limit of 3 storeys is desirable. When separated by a public street, park or other permanent open space, 4 to 5 storeys could be compatible.

81 Locations which can be described as landmark locations in a specific neighbourhood can be considered as exceptions.

82 Along Urban Corridors: Generally, along urban corridors a base height of 5 storeys at the street line is acceptable. It is possible that this base height will require modifications downward to adjust to special site conditions or upward to 8 storeys in special locations such as important intersections or transit stations.

83 Along Suburban Corridors: Generally suburban corridors have road right-of-way widths that are wider than urban corridors and a base case of 7 storeys might be appropriate. Site specific review may suggest upward or downward adjustments, with increases up to 9 storeys in special landmark locations or at major intersections.





The overall distribution of heights is such that the tallest buildings are placed at the centre of the reurbanisation area, and building heights decrease with distance from the centre, from high rise to medium rise to low rise. Landmark buildings over 15 storeys are placed at the north end of the new central park, serving to define and anchor the area. Taller buildings are also provided for on each of the four corners of the Danforth/Victoria Park intersection.

Next to the existing residential area, buildings on the central square are limited in height, stepping down from six storey "main street" type buildings on the street frontage, to two storeys at the rear next to the existing houses. The property depth between the new buildings along Victoria Park and the existing houses is in the 35 to 45 metre range. This depth combined with the low building heights creates a good transition between old and new areas.

K

Special Features

Guidelines for the Reurbanisation of Metropolitan Toronto

Both waterfront and ravine park locations are special features in Metro's urban fabric and should invite public access. High rise structures are often predominant along these special locations, capitalising upon private views. The Don Valley/Taylor Creek park system is edged by high rise structures, for example. These structures limit public access to both the top of bank and the lower park system. The combined size of the row of high rise structures also separates the

GUIDELINES

84 **The edge treatment of ravine and waterfront locations is a key element of the public realm. Any new development should create an edge condition that incorporates a public street and/or park system and controls building scale.**

85 **Metro's recent endorsement of a waterfront trail along Lake Ontario means that such a trail should be incorporated on all properties which front onto the lake. A minimum waterfront linear corridor width of 7.5 to 15 metres has been identified and must be adhered to for all new development.**

86 **Where the reurbanisation of large areas occurs through comprehensive planning, the public realm along the waterfront should be maintained at a minimum width of 50 metres.**

87 **Along waterfront locations, public access is critical and the scale of building beyond the 50 metre public space should not form a wall between the lake and the city fabric. Building height along waterfront locations should be controlled by an urban design plan which establishes the scale, character and location of both public and private facilities in these special waterfront locations.**

88 **Table land parks should be created in ravine edge reurbanisation projects to create "lobbies" to the extensive valley land parks system. Development should be set back through use of a publicly accessible easement or public land dedication to a minimum of 10 metres from the top of bank to allow for a walkway, bicycle trail and access to valley land park systems.**

89 **Building heights along ravine edges should generally not exceed 6 to 8 stories in height. The scale of edge structures must be sized to ensure compatibility with the ravine setting and to ensure the enjoyment of the natural scenery from the valley floor.**

90 **Microclimatic effects and conditions in existing parks and public spaces should be considered for all reurbanisation areas.**

remaining neighbourhood from the natural amenity. From the valley floor park system the imposing mass and scale of the high rise structures detracts from the quality of the open space experience available to the larger population of Metro.

In many locations the waterfront is similarly separated from the city by high rise structures. The relationship between a denser more compact urban environment and the access to natural features is critical to the success of a neighbourhood. The relative closeness of the buildings to the waterfront in the Beach is more than offset by the ready, regular and easy visual and physical access to the waterfront.

These special urban features must be critically evaluated in an area of reurbanisation to ensure that a broad enjoyment of the value of these areas is possible.

Applying the Guidelines:

Examples

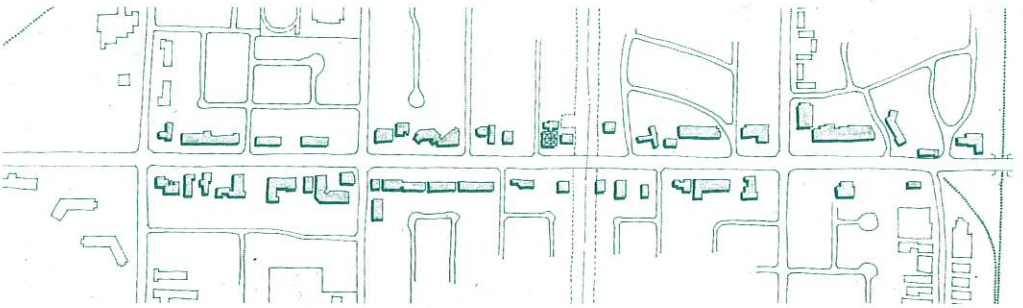
Guidelines for the Reurbanisation of Metropolitan Toronto

A Medium Density Corridor

Corridors represent a different context for reurbanisation than the case of the centre we have shown above. In the following example, the Guidelines are applied to a *medium density corridor*. The location chosen is an example of a significant reurbanisation resource in the Metro context. Corridors outside of the older urban areas have a form that is similar to the well recognized main streets, although larger in land base. In many of these locations the original built form is largely still in place. A strong automobile orientation has greatly affected the relationships between site and building. Again, the scheme that results is intended only to illustrate how the Guidelines might be applied when a linear area is being considered for reurbanisation.

The corridor in question is a section of Lawrence Avenue which extends eastward from Victoria Park to just east of Warden Avenue. At present the street consists of 1950's strip malls with parking fronting on Lawrence, and some more recent medium to high rise residential redevelopment projects.

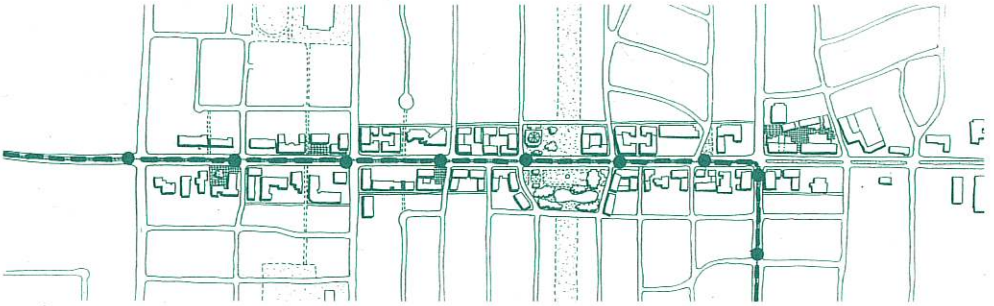
Immediately behind the Lawrence Avenue properties, on both sides of the street, are low rise single family dwelling neighbourhoods dominated by wide frontage lots and 1 1/2 storey buildings.



EXISTING CONDITIONS

Should this area be reurbanised?

The residential areas behind the buildings on Lawrence Avenue should not form part of the reurbanisation area. There are no other types of land use which would require a special response (e.g. industrial sites) or which would indicate against reurbanisation of the corridor (e.g. natural areas).



What type of reurbanisation area is it?

The linear nature of the reurbanisation area along Lawrence Avenue defines a corridor. There is a good supply of underutilised land that could be made available for redevelopment, particularly the low-intensity strip malls with parking on the street. And according to our hypothetical transit plan, there is an articulated LRT running along Lawrence to Warden. These characteristics meet the criteria for a *medium density corridor.*

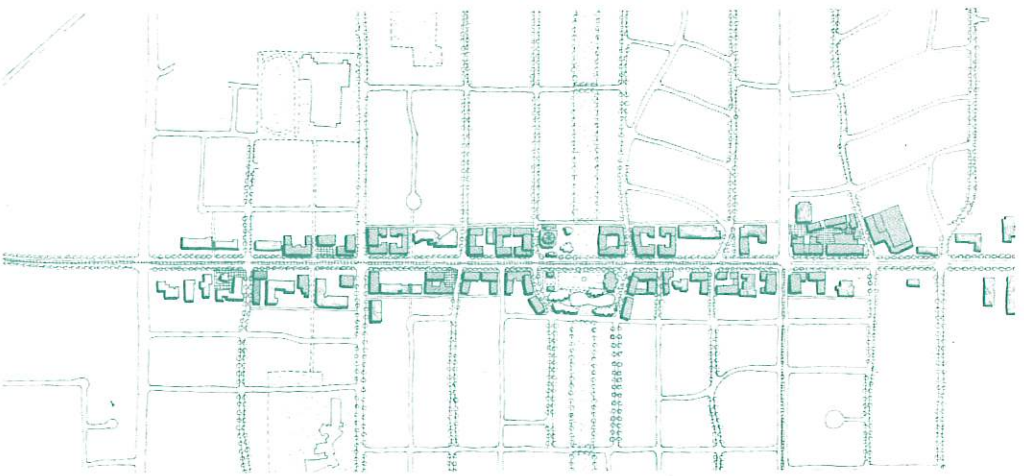
What is the appropriate mix of uses?

The balance "target" set out in the Guidelines is 1.5 persons per job. Within an approximate one kilometre balance zone from the corridor, the existing mix of uses is 2.6 residents per job. The local area is therefore light on employment, and could benefit by the introduction of employment uses. This corridor will act primarily as a local community focus, therefore it is not necessary to consider a larger balance zone.

Reurbanisation must occur at a maximum of 2.6 residents per job, so as not to worsen the existing level of balance. At the same time, the Guidelines suggest that corridors will not be primary areas for employment uses. A greater emphasis on employment in new development than what currently exists, while maintaining an emphasis on residential would represent an appropriate approach to this area, say 2.0 residents per job.

What is the appropriate overall density level?

The gross reurbanisation density recommended for medium density corridors is 200 to 250 residents or jobs per hectare. We can multiply these gross densities by the size of the reurbanisation area to get an indication of the overall resident population and total number of jobs that would be achieved over the long term when the area is reurbanised. Applying the balance ratio of 2.0 residents per job to the gross reurbanisation densities, we get an upper range of 167 residents and 83 jobs per hectare. Over a gross area of 20 hectares, a total resident population of 3,340 and a total of 1,660 jobs would eventually result (these figures would include existing resident and jobs retained in the corridor). We can, in turn, use these totals to estimate the total amount of floorspace after reurbanisation. Assuming 50 sq. m. per resident, and 30 sq. m. per worker, would result in roughly 165,000 sq. m. of residential floorspace, and about 50,000 sq. m. of employment-related floorspace.



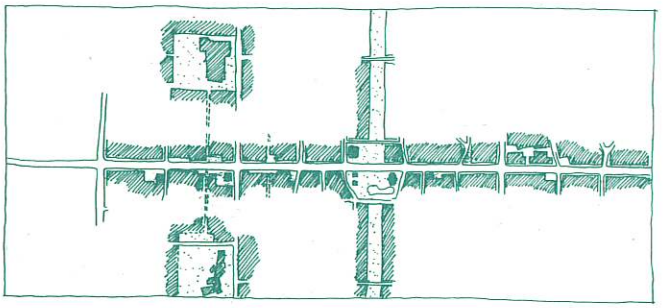
Urban Design Plan

The depths of existing lots along Lawrence Avenue East lend themselves to increased densities and the transformation of this traffic corridor into an important street with a mix of residential and commercial, pedestrian related uses. The existing strip malls and a few apartment buildings give little definition to the street and discourage pedestrian activity. Connections to adjacent neighbourhood streets are minimal and only arterial streets link areas north of Lawrence to areas south of Lawrence.

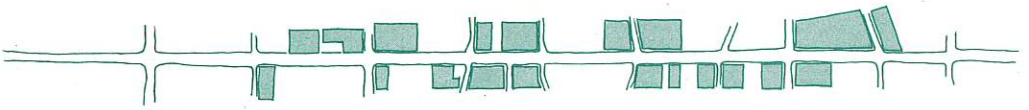
In its new incarnation, Lawrence Avenue would shed its image as a traffic corridor fronted by single use buildings to become a multi-use street defined by institutional, retail, office and residential buildings. A vertical land use distribution which places commercial uses at grade or on the lower levels of buildings and residential above would work well. Spreading this mix over the length of the street would ensure a greater street vitality.

The Public Realm

The Guidelines suggest that the public realm in corridors will fall into a range of between 30% and 40% of the corridor's total land area. The existing public realm in the corridor consists primarily of Lawrence Avenue itself. The network of streets could be extended in order to connect the neighbourhoods north and south of Lawrence. New street penetrations critical to weaving this fabric are indicated. Lots adjacent to these penetrations and small public open spaces located near the intersections could be redeveloped in a first phase. A generous tree planting program would bring shade, definition and beauty to these neighbourhood streets. The result would be an urban environment that while still maintaining a strong system for the automobile, would cater to more walking on the primary street, more active connections for pedestrians from the neighbourhoods and a scale of streetscape supported by buildings that will help reduce the apparent width of Lawrence Avenue.

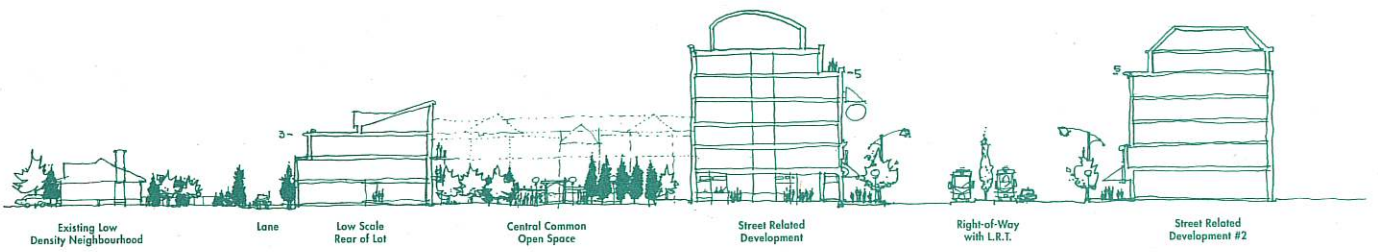


A reinvigorated public realm of small squares, treed streets and existing schools would form an integral part of the reurbanisation process. A new urban park is also proposed at the intersection of Lawrence and the hydro corridor allowing for slightly higher buildings of eight or nine storeys, at its edge.



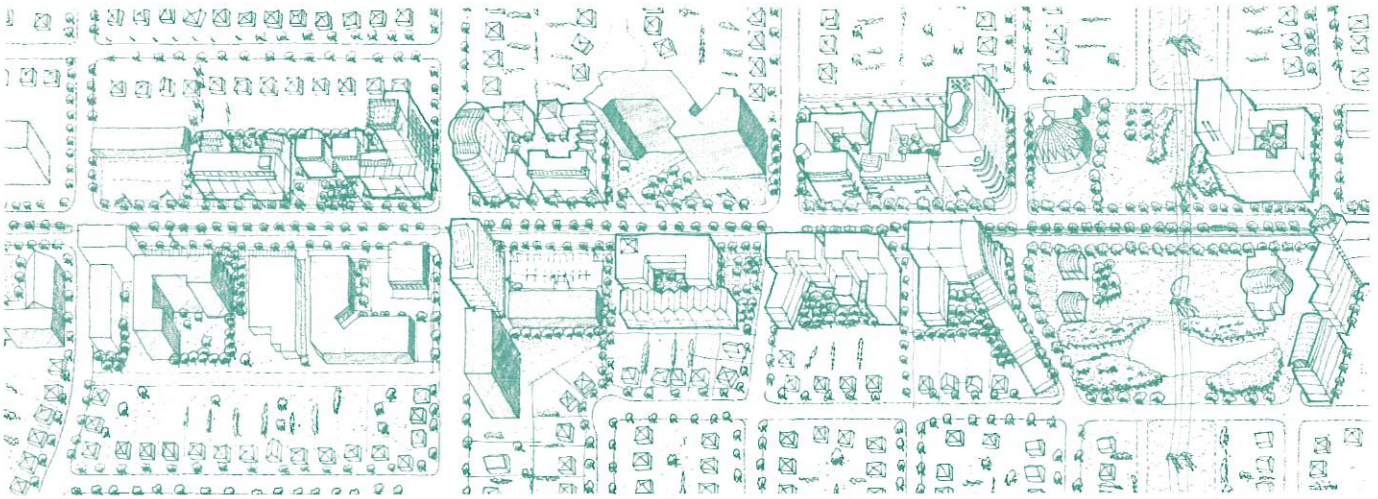
Site Specific Densities

The Guidelines suggest a net fsi of 3X for medium density corridors. Individual redevelopment projects should occur at this density. The illustration shows development parcels that could be reurbanised.



Fit and Transition

The section shows the potential of deep 65 metre lots to accommodate seven storey buildings at the street (set back at the fifth storey) with a courtyard arrangement of town houses falling to three storeys in height where adjacent to single family lots. The narrower 45 metre lots can accommodate a seven storey building (set back at the fifth storey) transitioning to three storeys at the rear. The intermediate zone of townhouses and three storey buildings between the street and the existing neighbourhoods can create residential uses of freehold tenure at a higher density than the single family housing.



Pedestrian Environment

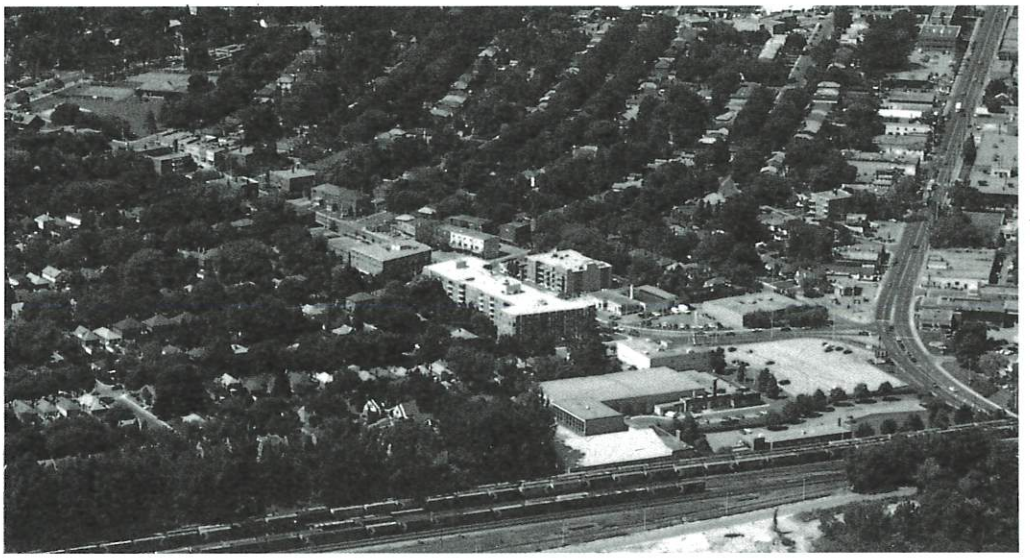
Improvements to the street network described above would dramatically improve pedestrian access from the residential neighbourhoods to Lawrence Avenue. At present, residents in these areas must take long circuitous paths in order to reach Lawrence. The improvements would provide direct access, also encouraging transit use.

The introduction of an LRT along Lawrence Avenue would be a great opportunity to upgrade the physical character of this street. While LRT service would encourage pedestrian traffic, the LRT median could give added definition and character to the street while allowing for safer pedestrian crossings. Street tree plantings along both sidewalks and on the median would greatly improve the pedestrian environment and provide immediate definition for strip mall sites that remain.

Parking

The density of re-urbanisation along this street implies that most parking will be placed underground. A system of rear lanes parallel to Lawrence is proposed as a means of access to these underground lots. Street parking along side streets should be encouraged.

A Low Density Local Centre



In what follows we apply the Guidelines to a low density local centre, for the purposes of illustrating how the Guidelines might be applied to a different context and type of reurbanisation area. The scheme is shown for purposes of illustrating the application of the Guidelines only. In this location in Metro there is an opportunity to create a focus for the community where the uses can be fully mixed. Retail and service uses can be located at grade as the market demands, and residential unit types can fill a gap in the housing stock of the existing area.

The area is situated around the corner of Millwood Avenue and Laird Drive. Laird Drive acts a transition zone between the low rise residential Leaside neighbourhood to the west, and an older industrial area near the train tracks to the east. Millwood runs diagonally through the neighbourhood from Laird and has always acted as a local main street and as a location for higher density residential within the larger plan of Leaside. In fact, the process of reurbanisation began several years ago with the introduction of several small scale residential buildings on underutilized sites.

Should this area be reurbanised?

Millwood Avenue is bounded by a low-rise residential neighbourhood which should not form part of the reurbanisation area. By eliminating this area, the extent of the reurbanisation area begins to be defined.

Laird Avenue is flanked by industrial uses. Whether these sites should be included in the reurbanisation area for non-industrial uses should be decided in the context of a Metro-wide analysis of the future need for industrial lands, and a determination of which lands should be made available to other uses and which should not. In this example, we assume that such an exercise has been undertaken, environmental issues have been addressed, and that it has been determined that the lands at the intersection of Laird and Millwood could be made available to other uses (by virtue of their proximity to a proposed GO station, for example).

Mixed use & higher residential density

Valley system

Industrial area

Park & public use

Single family

What type of a reurbanisation area is it?

Due to the relatively small amount of land available for reurbanisation, its nodal configuration around an intersection, and the area's position with respect to a surrounding neighbourhood, this area is likely to fulfil the role of a local centre. It is now serviced by several bus routes, which connect the area with the Bloor-Danforth and Yonge subway lines. We have assumed that according to a future transit plan, the area will continue to be served by bus. Under the Guidelines, the area would therefore be designated as a *low density centre*. The extent of the area is about twelve hectares, and is shown on the drawing.

What is the appropriate mix of uses?

The "target" balance set out in the Guidelines is 1.5 persons per job. The existing mix of residents and jobs within an area of roughly one kilometre radius from the centre was 1.2 residents per job. Comparing to the balance "target", the area has too much employment and too little residential use. This high amount of employment reflects the fact the industrial area along Laird is included in the balance zone for which existing balance is measured.

In order to at least preserve the existing level of balance and not worsen it, the mix in the reurbanisation area should at a minimum represent the existing level of balance, i.e. a minimum of 1.2 residents per job.

Because this reurbanisation area will act as a local or neighbourhood centre, it is not necessary to look at the existing mix of residents and jobs over a larger balance zone as a basis for determining the desirable balance in the reurbanisation area.

The Guidelines further suggest that the ultimate balance in local centres should be based on local conditions, and will likely have the least emphasis on employment of all reurbanisation areas.

Given the residential context of the centre, its small size, the existing relative undersupply of residential, and particularly, the good supply of existing and future jobs in the area (e.g. a potential high density centre at a proposed new GO station in the Thorncliffe Park area), this local centre could support a high residential component, represented by the upper end of the parameters, say 4 residents per job.

Reurbanisation should also attempt to improve upon the existing mix and types of housing units available within the local area. At present, the local area of Leaside is an inner Metro suburb of single family, semi-detached and low-rise apartment dwellings. Reurbanisation could diversify this inventory to include townhouses, stacked townhouses, and additional low-rise apartments of various sizes and tenure.

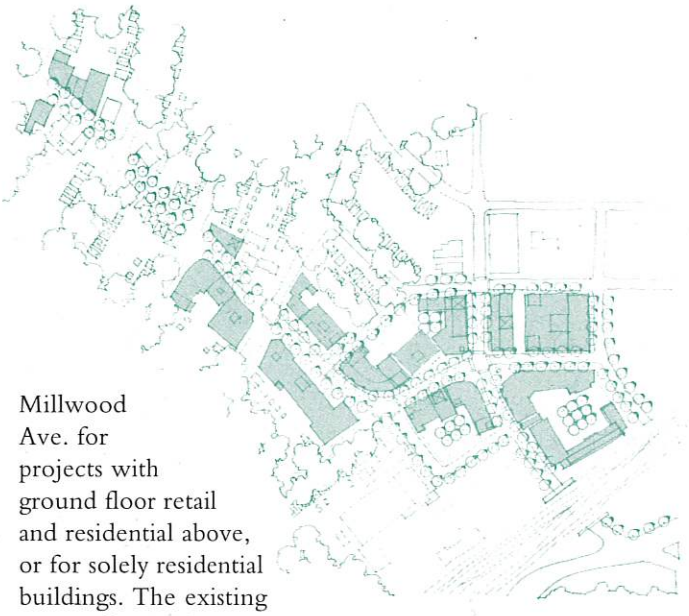
What is the appropriate density level?

The gross reurbanisation density recommended for low density centres is 125 to 175 residents and workers per hectare. We can multiply these per hectare densities by the overall area of the centre to get an idea of the total number of residents and jobs that the centre would eventually accommodate. Assuming the higher end of the density range, 175 residents and workers per hectare, and a balance ratio of 4 residents per worker, this translates into 140 residents per hectare and 35 workers per hectare. Over the total area of the centre, about 12 hectares, this represents a total resident population of 1,680 persons and 420 jobs.

Urban Design Plan

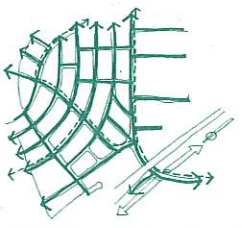
The intersection of Laird and Millwood represents a potential four corner reurbanisation area that could add to the existing higher density and mixed use zone that already exists along Millwood Avenue. A small section of mixed use exists currently along the Millwood frontage at the west end of the area.

The intersection of Laird and Millwood is shown with mixed use commercial/residential buildings. An office/industrial project is shown at the extreme north east block of the site. Small sites for individual buildings could be found along the length of Millwood Ave. for projects with ground floor retail and residential above, or for solely residential buildings. The existing Post Office and community centre are retained and made more prominent through adaptations to the public realm.



The Public Realm

The Guidelines suggest that at a minimum, the public realm in centres should represent 30% of the total area of the reurbanisation area. In the Millwoood/Laird local centre, there is a substantial existing public realm of streets. Some adjustments to the street pattern and addition of park space bring the total share of the area of the centre devoted to the public realm up to 35%. This adjustment is more a product of the specific response than a requirement for additional public space in this area. An open grid street system is currently in place throughout this neighbourhood. The street system is accessible to buses, which run through the area to the St. Clair, Eglinton, Pape, Broadview and Donlands subway stations. Some adjustment is required to make the intersection more functional and to create a new block system more suitable to the four corner development scheme. Additional streets were added to provide for front door address, and lanes were added to allow for off street servicing. The existing parking lot at the arena and community centre was reused for a mixed use building and a green public open space.



EXISTING MOVEMENT ROUTES

road system

transit system

IMPROVED MILLWOOD-LAIRD INTERSECTION

Site-Specfic Densities

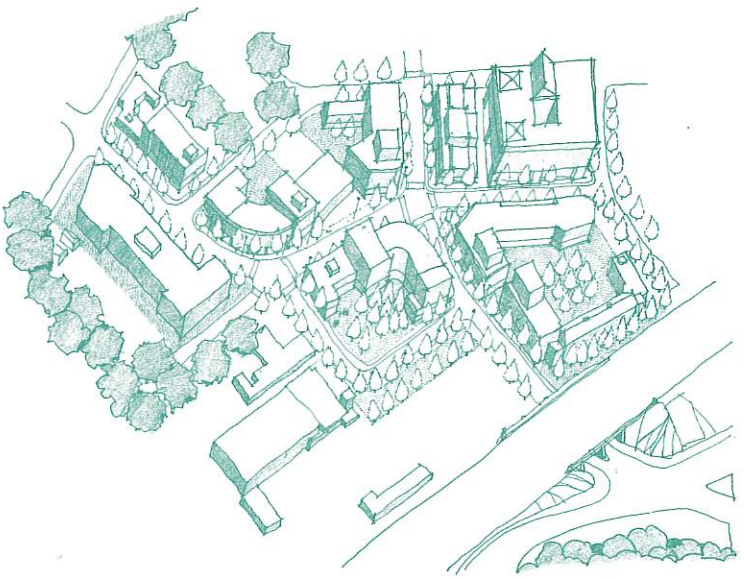
large sites

small single building sites

The Guidelines suggest that site specific densities in the centre should range from 2X to 3X net fsi. The fsi densities are applied to the net development parcels, once the public realm has been determined. The drawing shows the development parcels that would logically be available over time for redevelopment within the centre. The area is generally composed of small land holdings. As a result most of the existing buildings are small scale. Indeed some of the recent reurbanisation projects are responses to small properties. This type of smaller scale property ownership will help to keep the scale of redevelopment consistent with the neighbourhood. At a local level the site must be reviewed to establish guidelines on the size of redevelopment sites and the maximum size of single buildings introduced into the neighbourhood.

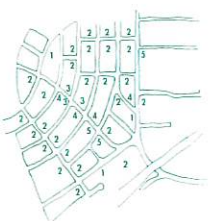
The Pedestrian Environment

The pedestrian environment in the local area is of a high quality, with a completely interconnected street system and full sidewalks. Gaps in the ground floor retail could be filled in by new projects. Many of the existing surface parking lots are the redevelopment sites and these will be removed in the future by new projects, improving animation at street level. Several new rear lanes are proposed to organize access to underground parking and servicing. This should help to enhance the quality of the pedestrian environment. Street tree planting along the sidewalks at the Millwood/Laird intersection and along Millwood Avenue would provide a higher quality of pedestrian environment more in keeping with the highly treed Leaside community.



Fit and Transition

Existing building heights fall in a range from two to five stories. The reurbanisation scheme works with this range placing buildings in the 5 to 6 storey range at the intersection and at the heads of the residential blocks. The existing Post Office and two to five storey street retail and residential buildings are left in place.



EXISTING HEIGHTS

Parking

Due to the reasonably high densities and high parcel coverage of the new buildings shown, parking is placed underground. Street parking along Millwood and the side streets can also be encouraged.